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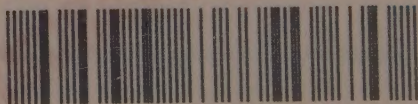


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THE LIFE OF MARGARET
GODOLPHIN



J. A. Harrison del.

Mrs Godolphin

THE LIFE OF MAR-
GARET GODOLPHIN
BY JOHN EVELYN

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“THE TITLE THAT HAS CONSECRATED THIS ALTAR
IS THE MARRIAGE OF SOULS, AND THE GOLDEN
THREAD THAT TIES THE HEARTS OF ALL THE WORLD.”

“HER FRIENDSHIP TO ME WAS PASSING THE LOVE
OF WOMEN.”

“NEVER WAS A MORE VIRTUOUS AND INVIOLEABLE
FRIENDSHIP.”

“TOO BLESSED A CREATURE TO CONVERSE WITH
MORTALS.”

C

PREFACE.

The Present Edition.—This issue of “*The Life of Margaret Godolphin*” is a modernized version of the *editio princeps* prepared by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, published in 1847, and again in 1848. The text has been carefully revised, and sundry textual changes have been made, in addition to the original editor’s conjectural emendations. As stated in the original Introduction (which follows this Preface), John Holmes, the well-known antiquary, enriched the book with a valuable collection of illustrative notes and genealogical tables. Some of this (from the second revised edition of 1848) has been utilized, though examined anew, for the present issue. A re-issue of Bishop Wilberforce’s edition appeared in 1888, edited by the late Lieut.-Col. Harcourt, of Nuneham Park, Abingdon, in whose family John Evelyn’s manuscript still remains.

The Frontispiece.—The engraving, reproduced

from the 1847 edition, is from the picture at Wotton, referred to by John Evelyn in the course of his narrative (*vide* pp. 93-4). "It may be observed," wrote Mr. Holmes, "that the *πενταλφα* which Evelyn had used at the commencement of this life, and in other of his MSS., is also represented on the urn in the picture. The painter's name is not on the portrait, neither is there any tradition in the Evelyn family of his name. A very competent judge pronounced it, after due examination, to be in his opinion the work of Gaspar Netscher, and his opinion is strengthened greatly by the fact that of the five pictures which Vertue mentions as painted by Netscher during his short stay in England, one is a picture of Lord Berkeley of Stratton, his lady, and a servant, in one piece, dated 1676. It is probable that Mrs. Godolphin would choose to be painted by the same artist who painted her intimate friends. Another portrait of Mrs. Godolphin, painted in all probability for her friend Lady Berkeley of Stratton, is mentioned in Sir Wm. Musgrave's list, as existing in 1790 at Berkeley Castle, and is still, it is believed, in the collection of the Earl Fitzhardinge."

The Pentalpha.—This device, symbol of constancy, is more commonly called the *pentacle*, or *pentangel*,

the latter being the form found in Middle English ; Sir Gawain had the symbol emblazoned on his shield and coat-armour :

“ It is a sign that Solomon set some while,
In betokening of troth, such title it holds,
For it is a figure that holds five points,
And each line o’erlaps, and locks in the other,
And everywhere it is endless, and English it call,
O’er all, as I hear, the Endless Knot.”¹

Margaret Godolphin’s Childhood.—A few additional facts may be added to John Evelyn’s record of her life. Her father, Colonel Blagge, of Horningsherth, Groom of the Bedchamber to Charles I, was one of the first to take up arms in his royal master’s cause : he was Governor of Wallingford, which surrendered in 1646. After the Restoration he was colonel of a regiment, and Governor of Yarmouth and Languard Port. He died November 14, 1660, and was buried at Westminster, where a monument to him formerly existed ; the inscription is preserved² :—

“ THOMAS BLAGGE, Armig.

In Agro *Suffolciensi* nobili et antiquâ familiâ
Vir egregiis animi et corporis dotibus,

¹ *Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyght*, ll. 620-665.

² *Vide* Genealogical Table I, and pp. 231-39, ed. 1848.

Quibus artes honestas adjunxerat,
Clarus militiæ et domi, Regibus Carolo Primo et
Secundo
Fidus imprimis et gratus”

At the time of his death Margaret was eight years old, the youngest of four daughters. Their mother, from whom Margaret seems to have inherited so much goodness, was Mary, daughter of Sir Roger North, of Mildenhall. She spent some part of her childhood abroad. The “old Duchess of Richmond” who took her to France, was Mary Villiers, sister of George, second Duke of Buckingham, who was accompanied in his escape from Worcester by Colonel Blagge. The Countess of Guilford, to whose care she was consigned, was Elizabeth Feilding, the Duke’s cousin. After the restoration she returned to her mother. When about fourteen she became a Maid of Honour to the Duchess of York, Anne Hyde, daughter of Lord Chancellor Clarendon; on the death of the duchess, March 31, 1671, she became Maid of Honour to Queen Catharine. “She had not been two years at Court before her virtue, beauty, and wit made her be looked upon as a little miracle.”

First References to Margaret in the "Diary."—

In these pages it is recorded how on October 16, 1672, John Evelyn and his sweet saint signed the sacred contract of "inviolable friendship"—"the Marriage of Souls"—"the golden thread that ties the hearts of all the world."

As early as June 30, 1669, we find an entry in the "Diary" mentioning "that excellent creature Mistress Blagge," in connexion with a journey down the river, as far as the sea, with Mrs. Howard, and her daughter, the Maid of Honour; the latter was probably Anne Howard, afterwards the wife of Sir Gabriel Sylvius—the Lady Sylvius to whom this work is dedicated.

The next reference in the Diary to Margaret is found under the date of July 31, 1672: "I entertained the Maids of Honour (among whom there was one I infinitely esteemed for her many and extraordinary virtues) at a comedy this afternoon, and so went home."

On December 15, 1674, John Evelyn placed on record that he witnessed the performance of the Masque of *Calisto, or the Chaste Nymph*, in which Margaret fittingly took the part of Diana. The following is the entry in the Diary, and may be compared with what is said in the *Life*: "Saw a comedie at night at Court, acted by the ladies onely, amongst them lady Mary

and Ann, his Royal Highness's two daughters, and my dear friend Mistress Blagg, who having the principal part, performed it to admiration. They were all covered with jewels."

"December 22: was at the repetition of the Pastoral, on which occasion Mrs. Blagg had about her near £20,000 worth of jewels, of which she lost one worth about £80, borrowed of the Countess of Suffolk. The press was so great, that 'tis a wonder she lost no more. The Duke of York made it good." By this time, however, Margaret had withdrawn from Court, though their Majesties were both unwilling to part with such "a jewel," and was living at Berkeley House with her friend Lady Berkeley, the wife of Lord John Berkeley of Stratton.

Berkeley House.—A great part of Margaret's life was henceforth passed at this famous town-house of Lord Berkeley, described "as one of the most magnificent palaces of the town." It was burned down in 1733. According to Holmes, the only view of it which is known to exist is from the large map of London published by Ogilby & Morgan about 1682. Evelyn has left us some account of the house, under September 25, 1672: "I dined at Lord John Berkeley's (of Stratton), newly arrived out of Ireland,

where he had been Deputy ; it was in his new house, or rather palace, for I am assured it stood him in near £30,000. It is very well built, and has many noble rooms, but they are not very convenient, consisting but of one *corps de logis* ; they are all rooms of state, without closets. The staircase is of cedar, the furniture is princely ; the kitchen and stables are ill-placed, and the corridor worse, having no report to the wings they join to. For the rest, the fore-court is noble, so are the stables, and above all, the gardens, which are incomparable by reason of the inequality of the ground, and a pretty piscina. The holly hedges on the terrace I advised the planting of. The porticos are in imitation of an house described in Palladio, but it happens to be the worst in his book, tho' my good friend Mr. Hugh May, his lordship's architect, effected it." ¹

Lord Berkeley of Stratton.—This prominent royalist who, as Lord Berkeley, had fought for Charles I at the same time with Colonel Blagge, so often re-

¹ Devonshire House was built on the site of Berkeley House. "Part of the gardens are still preserved in those attached to Devonshire House and Lansdowne (originally Bute) House."

Twickenham Park, whence Margaret dated one of her letters, was Lord Berkeley's country seat.

ferred to in contemporary literature, had in 1672 just about returned from Ireland, where he had held the office of Lord-Lieutenant. His career had been singularly successful. In his entry under December 3, 1665, Pepys records certain gossip at Captain Cocke's: "they talked much of matter, of state and persons, and particularly how my lord Berkeley had all along been a fortunate, though a passionate and but weak man as to policy; but as a kinsman brought in and promoted by my Lord of St. Albans, and one that is the greatest vapourer in the world, thus Colonel Wyndham says; and to whom only, with Jack Ashburne (i.e. Ashburnham) and Colonel Legg, the King's removal to the Isle of Wight from Hampton Court was communicated; and (though betrayed by their knavery, or at best by their ignorance, inso-much that they have all solemnly charged one another with their failures therein, and have been at daggers-drawing publicly about it) yet now none greater friends in the world."

In 1699 there was first published *Memoirs of Sir John Berkeley*, containing an account of his negotiations with Lieutenant-General Cromwell, Commissary-General Ireton, and other officers of the army for restoring King Charles I to the exercise of the govern-

ment of England. Mr. J. M. Rigg, in his article on Berkeley, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, makes the following observations on the book: "It is an interesting production written in a very lively style, and of great biographical value . . . but the serious discrepancies between it and the account given by Ashburnham, and the attempt which is apparent throughout it to magnify the author's part in the negotiations with Cromwell and Ireton at the expense of Ashburnham, while casting upon him the sole responsibility for the unfortunate issue of the negotiations with Hammond, impair its authority as an historic narrative."¹

Whatever may be the truth of the vexed question, it is certain that there was a strong bond of friendship between Lord Berkeley and the daughter of Colonel Blagge.

In the autumn of 1675, under date of October 15, John Evelyn entered the following statement in his *Diary*: "I settled affairs, my son being to go into France with my Lord Berkeley, designed Ambassador Extraordinary for France and Plenipotentiary for the general treaty of peace at Nimeguen." The journey was

¹ The whole of Mr. Rigg's article, and the list of authorities at the end, should be consulted.

delayed owing to my Lord's sudden illness—a fit of apoplexy at Whitehall. “He had put all his affairs and his whole estate in England into my hands,” Evelyn writes later on, “but what will not friendship and love make one do?” November 10 was the day appointed for my Lord Ambassador to set out. There were with him my Lady his wife, and Evelyn's dear friend, “who out of an extraordinary friendship would needs accompany my lady to Paris, and stay with her sometime, which was the chief inducement for permitting my son to travel, but I knew him safe under her inspection.” Evelyn rather welcomed Margaret's resolution, “as hoping it might divert her melancholy design and hankering after Herefordshire—her old notion of living by herself under the direction of the Dean of Hereford, Dr. George Benson, who had long been her spiritual father.” The party left Dover on November 14, 1675. Lord Berkeley returned from this embassy in June 1677; he died on August 26, 1678. Margaret returned on April 6, 1676. “She arrived to my great joy, whom I most heartily welcomed,”—so wrote her friend in his *Diary*.

Margaret's Marriage.—One previous entry in the *Diary* has not yet been referred to. Under date

of May 16, 1675, we find the following: "This day was my dear friend Mrs. Blagg married at the Temple Church to my friend Mr. Sidney Godolphin, Groom of the Bed-Chamber to His Majesty." The marriage was concealed even from her friend; and the *Memoir* sets forth the reasons for this strange secrecy. Soon after her return to London "she thought fit to make their marriage no longer a secret." The record in the *Diary* must have been added later than its date; but Evelyn seems to have had his suspicions. His young son,¹ Margaret's charge, younger by about two years than his "pretty pious pearly governess," did not altogether approve of the match, as may be seen by the following extract from a letter to his father:

"I most humbly thank you for your kind letter, it came to me just before my Pretty, Pious, Pearly Governesse left me; whose departure makes this place cease to be either Athens, or any thing else but a very melancholy abode to me: now my Minerva is gone I am as desolate as the owl that used to sit on her Temple, and almost in as great a passion as Achilles for the loss of Briseis; I could methinks looke very

¹ I.e. John, who when "about 15 years old wrote that elegant Greek poem which is prefixed to the second edition of the *Sylva*." Holmes prints the letter *in extenso*.

ὑπόδρα on her Agamemnon, and can hardly forbear drawing on him at this distance, but that your letter, like an appeasing gentle Minerva, quiets me and says—

Ἄλλ' ἄγε, λῆγ' ἔριδος, μηδὲ ξίφος ἔλκεο χειρί,
Ἄλλ' ἦτοι ἔπειςιν μὲν ὀνειδισον, ὥς ἔσεται περ,

so that I am satisfy'd to follow the hero's example and call my Agamemnon, though not οἰνοβαρὲς, yet with permission—

—κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, κραδίην δ' ἐλάφῳ . . .”

Sidney Godolphin.—At the date of his marriage he was thirty years of age, and well nigh at the beginning of his great career. He was born in 1645, the third son of Sir Francis Godolphin and Dorothy Berkeley, second daughter of Sir Henry Berkeley of Yarlington. His aunt Penelope was the wife of Sir Charles Berkeley, brother of Lord Berkeley of Stratton. He was at Court at an early age, first as page of honour to the King, and subsequently as Groom of the Bed-chamber; in 1678, he became Master of the Robes. It was at Court, before 1670, that he and Margaret became acquainted.¹ There are several eulogistic references in Pepys' *Diary*, 1667–8, to the early years

¹ *Cp. Life of Sidney Godolphin*, by the Hon. Hugh Elliot.

of Godolphin: "I do find him a very pretty and able person, a man of very fine parts, and of infinite zeal to my Lord Sandwich; and one that says he is (he believes) as wise and able a person as any prince in the world hath" . . . "indeed they say the gentleman is a fine man." Whatever views may be held of Godolphin's subsequent political career—a matter which does not concern us here—it is certain that he was a true lover and a loyal husband, and worthy to be styled "the person in the world who knew her best, and most she loved." Their wedded happiness was all too brief. The few scattered records in Evelyn's *Diary* between April 1676 and July 1678, may be noted:—

"1677, 12 Sept. To London, to take order about the building of an house, or rather an apartment which had all the conveniences of a house, for my dear friend Mr. Godolphin and lady, which I undertook to contrive and survey, and employ workmen till it should be quite finished; it being just over against His Majesty's wood-yard by the Thames side, leading to Scotland Yard."

"19 Sept. To Lambeth, to that rare magazine of marble, to take order for chimney-pieces, etc., for Mr. Godolphin's house . . ."

“19 *Oct.* I went with Mrs. Godolphin and my wife to Blackwall, to see some Indian curiosities ; the streets being slippery I fell against a piece of timber : &c.”

“31 *Oct.* Dined with Mrs. Godolphin, and returned home through a prodigious and dangerous mist.”

“9 *Nov.* Finished the lease of Spalding for Mr. Godolphin.”

“11 *Nov.* I was all this week composing matters between old Mrs. Howard and Sir Gabriel Sylvius, upon his long and earnest addresses to Mrs. Ann her second daughter, Maid of Honour to the Queen. My friend Mrs. Godolphin (who exceedingly loved the young lady) was most industrious in it, out of pity to the languishing knight.”

“1678, 25 *July.* There was sent me £70, from whom I knew not, to be by me distributed among poor people ; I afterwards found it was from that dear friend (Mrs. Godolphin), who had frequently given me large sums to bestow on charities.”

The End.—A few weeks later and we come across the saddest of all the entries in the *Diary*. The story can best be told in Evelyn's own words.

“1678, 3 *Sept.* I went to London to dine

with Mrs. Godolphin [formerly Mrs. Blagg, who had ben maid of honour to the Queene], and found her in labour ; she was brought to bed of a sonn, who was baptiz'd in the chamber, by the name of Francis, y^e susceptrors being S^r W^m Godolphin (head of the family,) Mr. Jn^o. Hervey, Treass^r. to the Queene, and Mrs. Boscawen, sister to S^r. William, and the father.

“8. Whilst I was at Church came a letter from Mr. Godolphin that my deare friend his lady was exceedingly ill, and desiring my prayers and assistance. My wife and I tooke boate immediately and went to White-hall, where to my inexpressible sorrow, I found she had ben attacq'd with the new fever, then reigning this excessive hot autumn, and which was so violent that it was not thought she could last many hours.

“9. She died in the 26th yeare of her age, to the inexpressible affliction of her deare husband and all her relations, but of none in the world more than of myselfe, who lost the most excellent and inestimable friend that ever liv'd. Never was a more virtuous and inviolable friendship ; never a more religious, discreet and admirable creature, beloved of all, admired of all, for all possible perfections of her sex. She is gon to receive the reward of her signal charity, and all other her Christian graces, too blessed a creature

to converse with mortals, fitted as she was by a most holy life to be received into the mansions above. She was for witt, beauty, good-nature, fidelity, discretion, and all accomplishments, the most incomparable person. How shall I ever repay the obligations to her for the infinite good offices she did my soule by so oft engaging me to make religion the termes and tie of the friendship there was between us! She was the best wife, the best mistress, the best friend that ever husband had. But it is not here that I pretend to give her character, *having design'd to consecrate her worthy life to posterity.*

“Her husband, struck with unspeakable affliction, fell down as dead. The King himselfe and all the Court expressed their sorrow. To the poore and miserable her losse was irreparable, for there was no degree but had some obligation to her memorie. So carefull and provident was she to be prepared for all possible accidents, that (as if she foresaw her end) she received the heavenly viaticum but the Sunday before, after a most solemn recollection. She put all her domestic concerns into y^e exactest order, and left a letter directed to her husband, to be opened in case she died in child-bed, in which with the most pathetic and endearing expressions of a most loyal and virtuous

wife, she begs his kindnesse to her memorie might be continu'd by his care and esteeme of those she left behind, even to her domestic servants, to the meanest of which she left considerable legacies, as well as to the poore. It was now seven yeares since she was maid of honour to y^e Queene, that she regarded me as a father, a brother, and what is more, a friend. We often prayed, visited the sick and miserable, received, read, discoursed and communicated in all holy offices together. She was most deare to my wife and affectionate to my children. But she is gon! This onely is my comfort that she is happy in Christ and I shall shortly behold her againe! She desir'd to be buried in the dormitorie of his family, neere 300 miles from all her other friends. So afflicted was her husband at this severe losse, that the entire care of her funerall was committed to me. Having closed the eyes and dropped a teare upon the cheeke of my deare departed friend, lovely even in death, I caused her corps to be embalmed and wrapped in lead, with a plate of brasse soldered thereon, with an inscription, and other circumstances due to her worth, with as much diligence and care as my grieved heart would permit me; I then retired home for two daies, which were spent in solitude and sad reflections.

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“17. She was accordingly carried to Godolphin in Cornwall, in a hearse with six horses, attended by two coaches of as many, with about 30 of her relations and servants. There accompanied the hearse her husband’s brother, S^r. W^m., two more of his brothers, and three sisters : her husband was so overcome with grief, that he was wholly unfit to travel so long a journey till he was more composed. I went as far as Hounslow with a sad heart, but was obliged to return upon some indispensable affaires. The corpse was ordered to be taken out of the hearse every night, and decently placed in y^e house, with tapers about it, and her servants attending, to Cornwall ; and then was honorably interr’d in the parish church of Godolphin. This funeral cost not much less than £1,000.

“With Mr. Godolphin I looked over and sorted his lady’s papers, most of which consisted of Prayers,¹ Meditations, Sermon-notes, Discourses, and collections on severall religious subjects, and many of her owne happy composing, and so pertinently digested, as if

¹ Among these papers was no doubt the Book of Prayers prepared for her by Evelyn and annotated by her : this volume was sold by auction some years ago. A short account of it is given by Mr. H. B. Wheatley in his edition of Evelyn’s *Diary and Correspondence*. Among the Evelyn Papers were also some letters to “*Electra*.”

she had been all her life a student in divinity. We found a diary of her solemn resolutions, all tending to practical virtue, with letters from select friends, all put into exact method. It astonished us to see what she had read and written, her youth considered.

“16 Oct. Mr. Godolphin requested me to continue the trust his wife had reposed in me in behalf of his little son, conjuring me to transfer the friendship I had for his deare wife, on him and his.”

In the following pages, now once again given to the world, the reader may judge how worthily her “Friend” carried out his design “to consecrate her worthy life to posterity.” His loving devotion has enriched our literature with the sweetest record of a child-like life—“a precious pearl without a spot.”

BISHOP WILBERFORCE'S
INTRODUCTION

To His Grace

EDWARD

Lord Archbishop of York,

Lord High Almoner, etc.

My Lord Archbishop,—

Your Grace will, I trust, allow me to inscribe the following pages to you.

Your unmerited kindness, shown to me on many other occasions, entrusted them to me for publication; and I well know that whilst your Grace has felt that the light of such an example as they exhibit ought not to be concealed, you rejoice to know that you have lived to see a British Court which in purity of morals and domestic virtue affords the most blessed contrast to those evil days through which Margaret Godolphin was enabled to live in the brightness of a godly purity, and to die in peace.

I have the honour to be,

Your Grace's obliged and affectionate

S. OXON.

Cuddesdon Palace,

February, 1847.

THE following Memoir was drawn up by the accomplished John Evelyn, of Wootton, and intended by him for publication, but it never received his final corrections. In a manuscript paper of memoranda left at Wootton in Mr. Evelyn's handwriting, its title occurs in a list of "Things I would write out faire and reform if I had the leisure." In his family, the MS. has remained until the present time, having passed into the hands of Mr. Evelyn's great-great-grandson, His Grace the Honourable Edward Venables-Vernon Harcourt, Lord Archbishop of York, by whom it has been entrusted for publication to the care of the present Editor. The MS., which is written with extraordinary care and neatness, and apparently in Mr. Evelyn's own handwriting, has been printed almost as it stands. The original spelling, which is not uniform throughout the volume, has been preserved wherever its strangeness did not throw some obscurity

over the meaning of the passage. A few words which here and there were needful to complete the sense have been conjecturally inserted, but always in brackets.

The text is illustrated by two genealogical tables, a short sketch of the life of Sir George Blagge, and a valuable body of illustrative notes, which the Editor owes to the accurate and well-furnished pen of John Holmes, Esq., of the British Museum, who has kindly contributed them to this volume.

From the genealogical table it will be seen that Mrs. Godolphin sprang from an ancient and honourable house, and that her blood still flows in the veins of some of the most illustrious of the nobility of England. Her husband, who rose to the highest honours of the state, was early left a widower, and, surviving his wife thirty-four years, never remarried. He transmitted to Francis, their only child, the earldom of Godolphin. This Francis, 2nd Earl of Godolphin, married Henrietta Churchill, eldest daughter and co-heir of John Duke of Marlborough, to whom in her own right passed the dukedom of Marlborough. By the death without issue of William Godolphin, first, Viscount Railton, and afterwards, Marquis of Blandford—their only son who attained to manhood,

—the honours of the house of Marlborough passed to the family of Spencer from the descendants of Margaret Godolphin. By the marriage of Mary the heiress of the 2nd Lord Godolphin to Thomas the 4th Duke of Leeds, her name and blood passed into the succession of that illustrious house.

But it was not for gentle descent or noble alliance that Margaret Godolphin was the most remarkable or best deserves remembrance. Rather did she add distinction to an ancient line, and transmit to all her posterity that memory of her virtues and inheritance of good deeds without which titles and hereditary rank are but splendid contradictions and conspicuous blemishes.

Her lot was cast in the darkest age of England's morals, she lived in a court where flourished in their rankest luxuriance all the vice and littleness, which the envy of detractors without, has ever loved to impute—and at times, thank God, with such utter falsehood—to courts in general.

In the reign of Charles the Second, that revulsion of feeling which affects nations just as it does individuals, had plunged into dissipation all ranks on their escape from the narrow austerities and gloomy sourness of puritanism. The court, as was natural, shared to

the full in these new excesses of an unrestrained indulgence ; whilst many other influences led to its wider corruption. The foreign habits contracted in their banishment by the returning courtiers were ill suited to the natural gravity of English manners, and introduced at once a widespread licentiousness. The personal character, moreover, of the King helped on the general corruption. Gay, popular, and witty, with a temper nothing could cross, and an affability nothing could repress, he was thoroughly sensual, selfish, and depraved—vice in him was made so attractive by the wit and gaiety with which it was tricked out, that its utmost grossness seemed for the time rather to win than to rebuke beholders. Around the King clustered a band of congenial spirits, a galaxy of corruption, who spread the pollution upon every side. The names of Buckingham and Rochester, of Etheridge, Killigrew, and Sedley, still maintain a bad preeminence in the annals of English vice. As far as the common eye could reach there was little to resist the evil. The Duke of York, the next heir to the throne, a cold-hearted libertine, shared the vices of the King, without the poor gloss of his social attractions. It was the day of England's deepest degradation, when in private life morality was a reproach, truth departed,

and religion a jest; when in affairs of state French gold and foreign influences had corrupted and subdued the throned monarch, and England's King was daily losing what had been gained by the Protector of the Commonwealth.

“It was a day of heartless merriment, upon which fell suddenly a night of blackness, which swallowed up its crew of godless revellers. A picture more deeply tragical than that thus simply sketched by Mr. Evelyn at the end, of Charles himself, can scarcely be conceived. ‘I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and prophaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday Evening) which this day se’nnight I was witness of, the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleaveland, and Mazarine, etc., a French boy singing love songs in that glorious gallery, whilst about 20 of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at Basset round a large table, a bank of at least 2,000 in gold before them, upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflexions with astonishment. Six days after was all in the dust.’ ”

—*Evelyn's Diary*, Feb. 1684-5.

! In the midst of such a general reign of wickedness, it is most refreshing to the wearied spirit to find by

closer search some living witnesses for truth and holiness—some who, through God's Grace, passed at His call their vexed days amongst the orgies of that crew, as untainted by its evils as is the clear sunbeam by the corruption of a loathsome atmosphere. Such an one was Margaret Godolphin, whom neither the license of those evil days, nor the scandal and detraction with which they abounded, ever touched in spirit or in reputation. Verily she walked in the flames of "the fiery furnace and felt no hurt, neither did the smell of fire pass upon her."

In what strength she lived this life the following pages will declare. They will show that ever by her side, conversing with her spirit through its living faith, there was a fourth form like unto the Son of God. And one thing for our instruction and encouragement may here be specially noted: that in that day of reproach she was a true daughter of the Church of England. Puritanism did not contract her soul into moroseness; nor did she go to Rome to learn the habits of devotion. In the training of our own Church she found enough of God's teaching to instruct her soul; in its lessons she found a rule of holy self-denying obedience; in its prayers a practise of devotion; in its body a fellowship with saints; in its ordinances a true

communion with her God and Saviour ; which were able to maintain in simple, unaffected purity her faith at court, in dutiful, active love her married life ; which sufficed to crown her hours of bitter anguish and untimely death with a joyful resignation and assured waiting for her crown.

Such is the sketch presented in these pages to the reader. May he in a better day learn in secret, for himself, those lessons of heavenly wisdom which adorned the life and glorified the death of Margaret Godolphin.

THE LIFE OF MARGARET GODOLPHIN

Un Dieu



Un Ami

TO THE LADY SYLVIVS

MADAM,

I am not unmindful of what your Ladyship lately suggested to me concerning that blessed Saint now in heaven. Do you believe I need be incited to preserve the memory of one whose Image is so deeply printed in my heart? But you would have a more permanent Record of her perfections, and so would I; not only for the veneration we bear her precious Ashes, but for the good of those who, emulous of her virtues, would pursue the Instance of it, in this, or perhaps any age before it. 'Tis certain the materials I have by me would furnish one who were Master of a style becoming so admirable a subject; and wished I have, a thousand times, the person in the world who knew her best, and most she loved, would give us the picture his pencil could best delineate: if such an

Artist as he is decline the undertaking for fear that even with all his skill he should not reach the original, how far short am I like to fall, who cannot pretend to the meanest of his talents ! But as indignation (they say) sometimes creates a poem where there is no natural disposition in the composer, so a mighty obligation, a holy friendship, and your Ladyship's commands, irresistibly prevail with me rather to hazard the censure of my Imperfections, than to disobey you, or suffer those precious memories to be lost which deserve consecration to Eternity : 'tis then the least and last service I can express to a dying friend for whom I should not have refused even to die myself. But, Madam, you will not expect I should be so exactly particular in the minuter circumstances of her birth and what passed in her Infancy and more tender years, because, [though] I have sometimes told her pleasantly I would write her life, when God knows I little thought of surviving her whom often I have wished might be at the closing of mine own eyes, I had not the honour of being acquainted with her till the last seven years of her life ; I say the little expectation I had of erecting to her a monument of this nature, made me not so industrious to inform myself of what was past as I should have been, for I am per-

suaded that from the beginning something of extraordinary remarkable was all along conspicuous in her ; nor was it possible that my admiration of her virtues, when I came to know her, should not have prompted me to inquire concerning many particulars of her life before I knew her ; something I learned casually conversing with her, diverse things from the papers communicated to me since her decease, and from what your Ladyship has informed me ; from whom I might derive ample matter to furnish upon this subject ; but, as I said, it would become a steadier hand, and the pen of an Angel's wing to describe the life of a Saint, who is now amongst those illustrious Orders : but, Madam, 'tis your peremptory Command I should set down what I know, and how diffident soever I ought to be of acquitting myself as I should, yet since 'tis hardly possible to say anything so indifferently, but must raise an Emulation in those that read or hear of it to imitate her virtues, [I enter] upon the adventure.

Where this excellent Creature was born, I have learned from you ; when, from herself ; namely, as I remember, on the Second of August, in the year 1652 ; a month and a year never to be forgotten by me, [nor to be passed over] without a mixture of different

passions, for then had I borne that Child whose early hopes you have often heard me deplore the loss of, nor do I yet remember him without emotion.

'Tis not to inform your Ladyship of a thing you do not know, but for method's sake that I speak something of the family of this Lady, which was very honourable ; her father was Colonel Thomas Blagge, a Gentleman of an ancient Suffolk family, and a person of so extraordinary wit and signal Loyalty, as not only made him esteemed by that blessed Martyr Charles the First, being made Groom of his Bedchamber, but to be intrusted with one of his principal Garrisons, namely, that of Wallingford, during the late rebellion. How worthily he acquitted himself of that charge in that unhappy war is upon another monumental Record. He lived to see his Majesty who now reigns restored to his Kingdoms and to die in his favour. Mrs. Blagge his Lady (Mother to our Saint) was a woman so eminent in all the virtues and perfections of her sex, that it were hard to say whether were superior her Beauty, Wit, or Piety ; for, as I have heard from those who intimately knew her, she was in all these very like her daughter, and then I am sure there could nothing be added to render her a most admirable person. The iniquity of the times had acquainted her

with sorrow enough to have distracted her, being left but in difficult circumstances, yet she lived to discharge all her husband's engagements that were very considerable, and to provide an honourable competency for no less than three young daughters, whereof this was the youngest.

It was by this excellent mother that this rare child was as early instituted in the fear of God as she could speak : and as her extraordinary discernment soon advanced to a great and early sense of Religion, so she brought her to be confirmed by the now Lord Bishop of Ely, Doctor Gunning, who it appears was so surprised at those early Graces he discovered in her, that he thought fit she should be admitted to the Holy Sacrament when she was hardly Eleven years of Age : from that moment forwards, young and sprightly as she was, she was observed to live with great circumspection, prescribing to herself a constant method of devotion, and certain days of abstinence, that she might the better vacate to holy duties and gain that mastery over her appetite, which, with all other passions, she had strangely subdued to my often admiration. But I should have told your Ladyship, though I remember not on what occasion, she went with the old Duchess of Richmond into France, who consigned

her to the care of the late Countess of Guildford, Groom of the Stole to the late Queen Mother, with whom she continued till her Majesty came into England. And this minds me of what I have heard, that being frequently tempted by that bigot proselytess to go to Mass and be a papist, our young Saint would not only not be persuaded to it, but asserted her better faith with such readiness and constancy, as (according to the argument of that keen Religion) caused her to be rudely treated and menaced by the Countess; so as she was become a Confessor and almost a Martyr before she was 7 years old. This passage I have from herself and she would relate it with pretty circumstances: but long stayed she not in France; when being returned to her mother, she lived with her some time in London, till the reigning pestilence of Sixty-five breaking out, everybody retiring into the Country, she accompanied her into Suffolk amongst her father's Relations there, and passed the Recess with so much order and satisfaction, that with extraordinary regret she was taken notice of to quit it; when being demanded by the then Duchess of York for a Maid of Honour, her Mother was prevailed with to place her little Daughter at Court. This was indeed a surprising change of Air, and a

perilous Climate, for one so very young as she, and scarcely yet attained to the twelfth year of her age : but by how much more the danger so much greater the virtue and discretion which not only preserved her steady in that giddy Station, but so improved her, that the example of this little Saint influenced not only her honourable companions, but some who were advanced in years before her, and of the most illustrious quality. What ! shall I say, she like a young Apostless began to plant Religion in that barren Soil ? Arethusa passed through all those turbulent waters without so much as the least stain or tincture in her crystal. With her Piety grew up her Wit, which was so sparkling, accompanied with a Judgment and Eloquence so extraordinary, a Beauty and Air so charming and lovely, in a word, an Address so universally taking, that after few years, the Court never saw or had seen such a Constellation of perfections amongst all their splendid Circles. Nor did this, nor the admiration it created, the Elogies she every day received, and application of the greatest persons, at all elate her ; she was still the same, always in perfect good humour, always humble, always religious to exactness. It rendered her not a whit morose, though sometimes more serious, casting still about how she might continue the hours

of public and private devotion and other exercises of piety, to comply with her duty and attendance on her Royal Mistress without singularity or reproach.

Thus passed she her time in that Court till the Duchess died, during whose sickness, accompanied (as it was) with many uncomfortable circumstances, she waited and attended with an extraordinary sedulity, and as she has sometimes told me, when few of the rest were able to endure the fatigue : and therefore here, before I proceed, I cannot but take notice of those holy and extraordinary reflections she made upon this occasion, as I find them amongst other loose papers under her own fair hand ; when comparing her dear Mother's sickness and other friends' departure with that of the Duchess, thus she writes :

“Mrs. N. dead. Was an example of patience under a burthen that was well-nigh unsupportable ; often she received the blessed Sacrament, often she prayed and was very much resigned, not surprised nor in confusion, but perceiving her sight decay, calling upon God after many holy and pious discourses and exhortations, she calmly bid her friends farewell.

“A poor woman dead. Worn to skin and bones with a consumption, she made no Complaints, but

trusted in God, and that what He thought fit was best, and to Him resigned her soul. A poor creature that had been a great sinner, died in miserable pains, in exceeding terror ; God was gracious to her, she was patient, very devout, she was released in prayer. My mother dead. At first surprised, and very unwilling ; she was afterwards resigned, received often, prayed much, had holy things read to her, delighted in heavenly discourse, desired to be dissolved and be with Christ, ended her life cheerfully, and without pain, left her family in order and was much lamented.

“The D—— dead. A princess honoured in power, had much wit, much money, much esteem ; she was full of unspeakable torture, and died (poor creature) in doubt of her Religion, without the Sacrament, or divine by her, like a poor wretch ; none remembered her after one week, none sorry for her ; she was tossed and flung about, and every one did what they would with that stately carcase. What is this world, what is greatness, what to be esteemed, or thought a wit ! We shall all be stripped without sense or remembrance. But God, if we serve Him in our health, will give us patience in our Sickness.”

I repeat the instance as set down in her diary, to show how early she made these useful and pious

Recollections, for she must needs be then very young, and at an age at least when very few of her sex, and in her circumstances, much concern themselves with these mortifying reflections. But, as I have often heard her say, she loved to be at funerals, and in the house of mourning, so being of the most compassionate nature in the world, she was a constant visitor of the sick and of people in distress. But, to proceed ; she had not been above two years at Court before her virtue, beauty, and wit made her be looked upon as a little miracle ; and indeed there were some addresses made her of the greatest persons, not from the attraction of affected Charms, for she was ever, at that spritful and free age, severely careful how she might give the least countenance to that liberty which the Gallants there do usually assume of talking with less reserve ; nor did this eclipse her pretty humour, which was cheerful and easy amongst those she thought worthy her conversation. It is not to be described (for it was though natural in her, inimitable) with what Grace, ready and solid understanding, she would discourse. Nothing that she conceived could be better expressed, and when she was sometimes provoked to rally, there was nothing in the world so pleasant, and inoffensively diverting,

(shall I say) or instructive ; for she ever mingled her freest entertainments with something which tended to serious, and did it in such a manner, as always left some impressions extraordinary even upon those who came perhaps with inclinations to pervert the most harmless conversations ; so as it was impossible for any to introduce a syllable which did not comply with the strictest rules of decency.

But I shall not be so well able to describe what I should say upon this occasion, as by giving your Ladyship the measures which she prescribed herself for the government of her actions, when she was of duty to attend upon her Majesty in public, and when it was not only impossible, but unbecoming to entertain those who composed the Royal Circle, and were persons of the most illustrious quality, without censure and rudeness. Behold then, Madam, what I find written in her own hands again, and that might be a copy for all that succeed her in that honourable Station to transcribe and imitate it ; for she kept not only a most accurate account of all her actions, but did likewise register her serious purposes and resolutions, the better to confirm and fix them, so as they were not hasty fits of zeal and sudden transports, but solemn and deliberate ; and this I rather choose to

do also in her own very words and method—innocent, natural, and unaffected.

“My life, by God’s Grace, without which I can do nothing.”

“I must, till Lent, rise at half an hour after eight o’clock ; whilst putting on morning clothes, say the prayer for Death and the Te Deum : then presently to my prayers, and so either dress myself or go to Church prayers. In dressing, I must consider how little it signifies to the saving of my soul, and how foolish it is to be angry about a thing so unnecessary. Consider what our Saviour suffered.—O Lord, assist me.

“When I go into the withdrawing room, let me consider what my calling is : to entertain the Ladies, not to talk foolishly to Men, more especially the King ; let me consider, if a Traitor be hateful, she that betrays the soul of one is much worse ;—the danger, the sin of it. Then without pretending to wit, how quiet and pleasant a thing it is to be silent, or if I do speak, that it be to the Glory of God.—Lord, assist me.

“At Church let me mind in what place I am ; what about to ask, even the salvation of my soul ; to

whom I speak,—to the God that made me, redeemed and sanctified me, and can yet cut me off when He pleases.—O Lord, assist me.

“When I go to my Lady Falmouth’s, I ought to take pains with her about her Religion, or else I am not her friend ; to show example by calmness in dispute, in never speaking ill of anybody to her, but excusing them rather.

“Go to the Queen always at nine, and then read that place concerning the drawing room, and let my man wait for me to bring me word before public prayers begin. If I find she dines late, come down, pray and read, namely, that concerning prayer ; and think why I read, to benefit my soul, pass my time well, and improve my understanding.—O Lord, assist me.

“Be sure still to read that for the drawing room in the privy chamber, or presence, or other place before prayers, and so again into the drawing room for an hour or so ; and then slip to my chamber and divert myself in reading some pretty book, because the Queen does not require my waiting ; after this to supper, which must not be much if I have dined well ; and at neither meal to eat above two dishes, because temperance is best both for soul

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and body ; then go up to the Queen, having before read, and well thought of what you have written. Amen.

“Sit not up above half an hour after eleven at most ; and as you undress, repeat that prayer again ; but before, consider that you are perhaps going to sleep your last ; being in bed, repeat your hymn softly, ere you turn to sleep.

“If I awake in the night let me say that” (for which she had collected many excellent passages, as I find among her papers) “psalm.—Lord, assist me.

“In the morning, waking, use a short devotion, and then as soon as ever you awake, rise immediately to praise Him.—The Lord assist me.”

In another place of the same Diary, about which time I suppose there was some play to be acted by the Maids of Honour.—“Now as to pleasure, they are speaking of plays, and laughing at devout people ; well, I will laugh at myself for my impertinencies, that by degrees I may come to wonder why anybody does like me ; and divert the discourse ; and talk of God and morality : avoid those people when I come into the drawing room, especially among great persons, to divert them ; because no raillery almost can

be innocent : go not to the Duchess of Monmouth above once a week, except when we dress to rehearse, and then carry a book along with me to read when I don't act, and so come away before supper.

“Talk little when you are there ; if they speak of anybody I can't commend, hold my peace, what jest soever they make ; be sure never to talk to the King ; when they speak filthily, though I be laughed at, look grave, remembering that of Michah [Malachi],—there will a time come when the Lord will bind up His jewels. Never meddle with others' business, nor hardly ask a question ; talk not slightly of religion. If you speak anything they like, say it is borrowed, and be humble when commended. Before I speak, Lord, assist me ; when I pray, Lord, hear me ; when I am praised, God, humble me ; may the clock, the candle, everything I see, instruct me ; Lord, cleanse my hands, let my feet tread Thy paths. Is anybody laughed at, say it may be my case ; is any in trouble, say, ‘Lord, in justice I deserve it ; but Thou art all mercy ; make me thankful.’ On Festival evens I resolve to dine at home, and to repeat all the psalms I know by heart,” (of which she had almost the whole psalter,) “reserving my reading or part of my

prayers till night ; and sup with bread and beer only.

“On Fridays and Wednesdays I’ll eat nothing till after evening prayer ; and so come down as soon as ever the Queen has dined, without going to visit, till my own prayers are finished.

“The same will I observe the day before I receive ; use to pray on those days by daylight, and early on Sundays, and think of no diversion till after evening prayer ; to dine abroad as little as possible, but perform my constant duty to God and the Queen. Assist me, O Lord ; Amen.

“Sing Psalms now and then out of Sundays. Endeavour to beg with tears what you ask, and O let them be, O Lord, my only pleasure. There are 3 Sundays to come from this Saturday night ; pray one day earnestly to God for love, and against taking His name in vain, pray against intemperance and sensuality ; and the other day for meekness, and against envy ; another for fear and alliance, and against detraction.

“I have vowed, if it be possible, not to sit up past ten o’clock ; therefore, before you engage in company, go down and read this, and be as much alone as you can ; and when you are abroad talk to men as little as may be : carry your prayer-book in

your pocket, or anything that may decently keep you from conversing with men."

Behold what this blessed saint had promiscuously set down in her diary at several times, as resolutions made upon several occasions, all of them tending to the institution of her life in a course of extraordinary and early piety, for she was now very young, and I, therefore, give them your Ladyship in her own words, without method or studied connexion : nor are these the first I have seen of hers in this nature. She did upon several occurrences record her purposes, and what she so resolved she punctually performed. But with what extraordinary caution she governed herself at Court ; how holy, innocent, instructive, and useful, her entire conversation was ; how much she improved in virtue, and made devotion the pleasure as well as employment of her time, I need not tell your Ladyship : nor used she to trick and dress herself up, though in so splendid and vain a theatre, to the purposes of vanity, or to be fine and adored : she was extremely shy of talking among the gallants and young men, to pass away the tediousness of attendance ; nor made she impertinent visits ; for she had filled up the whole day, and destined almost every minute of it to exercise. When, therefore, I

have summed up all, and considered well how much of it all I have seen, and how with it all she preserved the lively and elegant conversation which rendered her so infinitely agreeable to all that knew her, I cannot but redouble my admiration, and especially how often and sensible she has discoursed with me concerning the wonderful satisfaction she took in the duties of Religion.

But here, before I proceed any further, the method of time, and other circumstances require me to say something how I came to be first acquainted with this excellent creature, and by what ties of sacred friendship I find myself so highly obliged to celebrate her memory ; and this I shall do the rather because the Lord has so great a part in it, that without ingratitude, I may not pass it over ; nor is it without fresh delight that I still call to mind those innocent days, and the sweet conversation which fifteen years since we enjoyed, that our families being near to one another, gave us the happiness to be known to the most obliging neighbour in the world ; from so long a date it is that my wife computes her first having had the blessing of beginning an acquaintance with Mistress Blagge, whom your mother and sister sometimes kindly brought with them to

our poor villa : but few of those civilities of casual or respectful visits had passed, before my wife had discovered such extraordinary charms, marks of virtue and discretion in her conversation, that she would often reprove the diffidence I was wont to express, when they would sometimes discourse of Piety and Religion, eminent among the Court Ladies ; and upon which subject your Ladyship would frequently join with my wife in conflict against me, to the reproach of my Moroseness, and Infidelity, especially of a thing so airy and so gay as some represented this miracle to me. And in this Error I had certainly persisted, notwithstanding I had sometimes taken notice of her, both at my house and at Church, to be a very agreeable Lady ; but that she or anybody else in her Court circumstances, was principled with such a solid Virtue, and did cultivate it to that degree, I was brought to believe with so much difficulty, that it was almost seven years before your Ladyship could convince me. You had, indeed, a Sister there, whose perfections would no longer suffer me to continue altogether in this false persuasion ; but to believe there were many Saints in that Country I was not much inclined ; nor likely had changed that opinion, if an employment had not

of necessity sometimes obliged me to come from my recess, when I as little affected to be known by and to multiply acquaintance of that sex as another man. I minded my Books and my Garden, and the Circle was big enough for me. I aspired to no offices, no titles, no favours at Court, and really was hardly known to those next neighbours of mine, whom I had lived almost twenty years by : but the Country where this Lady lived I had much more aversion to, for the reasons you may guess, and which made her quit it as soon as she could. It was, I say, about a year that she had sometimes been at my house, when your Ladyship came to hector me out of my contracted humour, but I continually returned to it ; and when, by Chance, you at any time named her, I fancied her some airy thing, that had more Wit than Discretion ; till upon your Ladyship and my Wife's more severely reproaching me for being scarcely civil to a Companion of your excellent Sister's, for whom I had much esteem (though but little acquainted), I found myself obliged, in good manners, to wait upon her when I came to Whitehall. I speak of the Lady, your Sister, then Maid of Honour ; for I would object, that there was a Wit with her whom I feared, and that I was the

most unfit person in the world for the entertainments of the Ante-Chamber, and the little Spirits that dwell in Fairy Land. You assured me she was humble and religious, and extremely serious, and that [if] I would believe you, I should not be displeased with the adventure ; for though she had abundance of Wit, and rallied shrewdly, yet she was civil and discreet, and extraordinary obliging. Upon this, I made your Sister a visit, and surprised Mistress Blagge, who it seems that day was dressed for Audience and Ceremony, upon which I would have withdrawn, but her Chamber-fellow stayed me, and I was not unwilling to hear her talk ; but I since came to understand, it was a day of solemn devotion with her, and she excused herself, said little, and looked very humble, which I liked, and so for this time, took my leave.

I concluded by this she might not be that pert Lady I had fancied ; and she afterwards spoke courteously to me, casually meeting her in the house, and that she hoped she had not frightened me from her apartment. I came once or twice after this with my wife to visit your Sister ; when this Lady keeping her chamber caused me one day to dine with her, which I took kindly, because it was without affectation and with

no danger of surfeiting. But her conversation was a treat, and I began to admire her temperance, and took especial notice, that however wide or indifferent the subject of our discourse was amongst the rest, she would always divert it to some Religious conclusion; and so temper and season her Replies, as showed a gracious heart, and that she had a mind wholly taken up with heavenly thoughts.

After this introduction she conjured me not to baulk her holy Cell, and I was not a little pleased to be so solemnly diverted and find myself mistaken, that so young, so elegant, so charming a Wit and Beauty, should preserve so much Virtue in a place where it neither naturally grew nor much was cultivated; for with all these perfections, Vivacity and Apprehension beyond what I could expect, she seemed unconcerned and steady, could endure to be serious, and gently reprove my Moroseness, and was greatly devout, which put me out of all fear of her Raillery, and made me look upon her with extraordinary respect. Thus every visit abated of my prejudice: her discourses were not trifling and effeminate, but full of Virtue and material, and of a most tender regard to Religion. But it was after your Ladyship's Mother was gone into Lincolnshire, and had carried away

her companion, that she told me, "now Mrs. Howard is gone, she believed she should have little of my Company; but if I were not weary of her, and would be so charitable, she should take it kindly that I came often to her." This was a Compliment you know I needed not, for by this time I was so well assured of her Inclination to Goodness, that she could not imagine me capable of neglecting a person from whose conversation I never returned but with advantage. I soon perceived what touched me to the heart, and that was her soul; and how her inclinations pointed to God; that her discourses, designs, and actions tended always thither: and other observations which I made to my extraordinary wonder and admiration. This Creature (would I say to myself) loves God; it is a thousand pities but she would persist; what a new thing is this! I think Paula and Eustochium are come from Bethlehem to Whitehall! and from this moment I began to look upon her as sacred, and to bless God for the graces which shone in her. I daily prayed for her as she had enjoined me, and she began to open some of her holy thoughts to me; and I saw a flagrant devotion, and that she had totally resigned herself to God; and with these Incentives, who, that had any

sense of Religion, could forbear to value her exceedingly ?

It was not long after this, that being one day to visit her, she seemed to me more thoughtful than ordinary. I asked her, what made her look so solemnly. She told me, she had never a friend in the world. No, said I, that's impossible ; I believe nobody has more ; for all that know you must love you, and those that love you are continually your friends. But I, who well knew where her heart at that time was, asked her what she esteemed a certain Gentleman beyond the Seas. Alas, says she, he is very ill, and that makes me very much concerned ; but I do not speak to you of him, whom God will I hope be gracious to, but I would have a FRIEND. In that name is a great deal more than I can express, a faithful friend, whom I might trust with all that I have, and God knows, that is but little ; for him whom you mean does not care to meddle with my concerns, nor would I give him the trouble. This, to my remembrance, were her very expressions to me. Madam, said I, do you speak this to me, as if I were capable of serving you in anything considerable ? I believe you the person in the world (replied she) who would make such a friend as I wish for, if I had

merit enough to deserve it. Madam, said I, consider well what you say, and what you do, for it is such a trust, and so great an obligation that you lay upon me, as I ought to embrace with all imaginable respect and acknowledgment for the greatest honour you could do me: Madam, to be called your friend were the most desirable in the world, and I am sure I should endeavour to acquit me of the duty with great cheerfulness and fidelity. Pray leave your complimenting, (said she smiling) and be my friend then, and look upon me henceforth as your Child. To this purpose was her obliging reply; and there standing pen and ink upon the table, in which I had been drawing something upon a paper like an Altar, she writ these words: *Be this the Symbol of Inviolable Friendship,*—*Marg. Blagge, 16th October, 1672;* and underneath, *For my brother E*——; and so delivered it to me with a smile. Well, said I, Madam, this is an high obligation, and you have already paid me for the greatest service that I can ever pretend to do you; but yet do you know what you have done? Yes, says she, very well; but pray what do you mean? Why, said I, the title that has consecrated this Altar is the Marriage of Souls, and the Golden Thread that ties the hearts of all the world; I tell you, Madam,

Friendship is beyond all relations of flesh and blood, because it is less material ; there is nature in that of parents and kindred, but [that of] Friendship is of course and without election, for which the Conjugal State itself is not always the most happy ; and, therefore, those who have had best experience choose their friend out of all these circumstances, and have found him more lasting, and more effectual. By this Symbol you give me title to all that you can with Honour and Religion part with in this world ; and it is a topic I could adorn with glorious examples of what I speak ; and the noblest things have been said upon it ; and the Laws and Measures of Friendship are the nicest and the most obliging ;—but you know them all. Well, replied she, smiling, Be it so,—pray what am I to do ? Nay, said I, I'll tell you first what you are to suffer.

The privileges I claim in virtue of that character are that I may visit you without being thought importunate ; that I may now and then write to you to cultivate my Style ; discourse with you to improve my Understanding ; read to you to receive your Reflections ; and that you freely command me upon all occasions without any reserve whatsoever : you are to write to me when I am absent ; mention me in

all your prayers to God, to admonish me of all my failings, to visit me in sickness, to take care of me when I am in distress, and never to forsake me, change or lessen your particular esteem, till I prove inconstant or perfidious, and no man's friend; in a word, there is in Friendship something of all relations, and something above them all. These, Madam, are the Laws, and they are reciprocal and eternal.

Thus, for a time, 'twixt jest and earnest, the conversation put her into the most agreeable humour in the world. Well, said she, I will consider of what you say; but pray remember you are my friend, and when next you come, I will tell you what I have for you to do in good earnest; and a little after wrote me this Letter:—

“MY FRIEND,—

“I have considered and minded well what was said, and what I writ, and will not recall it. I understood something of the office of friendship before I knew you, but after what you have said and offered, I believe I shall need little Instruction. Gratitude, joined with the greatest esteem I had before of you, will require all that you mention on my part: you are, then, my first friend, the first that ever I had,

and ever shall you be so. This is truth upon the word of a Christian; and I believe I shall not lay down my resolution of continuing yours but with my life. I thankfully accept all your Counsel, and will endeavour to follow it; but birds themselves have always the good nature to teach their young ones, and so must you; look upon me then as your child as well as friend, and love me as your child, and, if you will, call me so. What Measures you are to observe I meddle not with; for a friend may do what he pleases; they who give money, give all: it is a saying of your own as to Charity; they that are friends are all things,—let that be mine. But as for the returns for the good offices I receive, I believe my advice can be of little use to you, unless to serve you as an Act of humility, which must be all the reason you will ever have to require it; what shall I say then more? till death reckon me your friend; you see how I think I am with you; and now, after all this, I may grow old or forgetful, and melancholy or stupid, and in that Case, will no more answer for myself than for a Stranger; but, whilst I am myself and a Christian, I will be yours.”

It would be an unpardonable ostentation in me,

and a great temptation to overvalue myself, and the poor services she was pleased to accept of, should I here repeat what she has left me under her own hand upon this subject, in the most pious and endearing expressions that could possibly fall from the most sincere and obliging Creature in the world: but to let them pass: it is certain, that from this moment, I no more looked upon her as Mistress Blagge, but as my child indeed, and did, to the utmost of my poor ability, advise and serve her in all her secular and no few spiritual affairs and concerns, with a diligence and fidelity becoming the trust and confidence she reposed in me, as an honour to be envied by the best of men: her friendship after this to me was so transcendently sincere, noble, and religious, as taught me all its dimensions, beyond anything I ever read of its highest Ideas; and she herself was heard to say, what she once thought to be a name only and nothing else, she found a real existence; and that friendship was for mutual Improvement, and to fortify every virtue; and, indeed, she was able to direct, and counsel, and encourage, and comfort. Nay, and has often told me with becoming passion, that she with Joy could die for a friend; urging that sentence of St. Paul's, "nor are the measures hard"; I am sure

willingly would I have done it for her : O how sweet, O how desirable ! And, indeed, these holy transports made the Christians communicate all they had ; the apostles speak of some who would have plucked out their very eyes and laid down their necks for Him, and called nothing their own which others wanted. It is this which made those saints of one mind and of one heart ; it is this has crowned a hundred thousand martyrs, and showed us that the most consummate friendships are the products of Religion and the Love of God. There are innumerable expressions of this nature to be found in her letters to me, which are charming, and indeed, so tender and personal, that, though one who knew my demerits as well as I myself do, would suspect their sincerity, yet I knew to be from her heart, which was full of most generous resentments. In a word, I may say, as David did of Jonathan, her friendship to me was passing the love of women ; nor verily, was it without an entire sympathy on my part ; and there was providence in it, as well as inclination ; for the exceeding and most eminent piety and goodness that ever consecrated a worthy friendship, shone so bright in this blessed saint, as entitled her to all the services, respect, and veneration I was capable of giving her.

Never am I to forget this golden expression of hers to me. I would have (says she) nothing that passes between us have any Resemblance of Friendships that do not last. But, Madam, whither has this endearing topic transported me.

After this solemn engagement then, she soon acquainted me with many of her concerns; made me the depository of her pious thoughts and resolutions, and put her whole fortune entirely into my hands; which, indeed, lay in some danger for want of that assistance, which she might have had from an able person, though from none more faithful and more industrious to improve it to the best of my capacity; I was only grieved when at any time she thought it a trouble to me; but she would say: I am your Child, and whither should I go but to you? never will I do anything without you whilst I live. More deference and humility could she not have paid to a father, more confidence in a friend; and this, tempered with that sweetness and extraordinary piety, that I am not able to support the consideration of the loss of such a friendship without unspeakable grief.

Seldom or rarely came I to wait on her (if she were not in company), but I found her in her little

oratory, and sometimes all in tears, for never was Creature more devout and tender; and a thousand Cases and questions would she propound to me, for which I would still refer her to that reverend and learned divine, with whom she did constantly correspond upon all occasions of spiritual advice; so careful and curious was this saint in the concernments of her soul; but she would often tell me, he was too gentle, and, therefore, required of me to deal impartially; [that] I was her friend, and that a friend was Ghostly father, and everything to her; indeed I would often reprove her tiresome methods and thought to plant the consideration of the memory and Love of God in her thoughts; and to cure her of the sad and frightful apprehensions she sometimes seemed to have, that God was a severe exacter; that she had never done enough, and served an austere Master, not to be pleased without abundance of labour and forms without end; and for this she would frequently give me thanks, that I had let her see and taste more of the Love of God and delices of Religion than ever she had before. And, verily, this holy and religious temper of hers, was enough to win the esteem of all that had any sense of goodness. Nor was her time wholly spent in the contemplative part of piety; she

was always doing some good offices for one or other, gave frequent and considerable relief to poor and indigent people, and not seldom made me her almoner, and the hand to convey it where she could not well herself; but of this and the many visits she in her own person made, delicate as she was, to refresh and comfort the sick and miserable, even amongst the most wretchedly poor, not without great inconveniency to her health, I shall give account hereafter; but hitherto was she advanced, being yet hardly entered her nineteenth year, an age that few in her circumstances so soon set out at; and [would] that I begun as early and as early finished!

We will now then look upon her as at Whitehall, whither she came from St. James' to wait upon her Majesty, after the death of the Duchess, when she was not above sixteen. I had not then indeed the honour to know her; but I have heard from others, that her beauty and her wit was so extraordinary improved as there had nothing been seen more surprising, and full of charms; everybody was in love with, and some almost dying for her, whilst with all the modesty and circumspection imaginable, she strove to eclipse the lustre which she gave, and would often check the vivacity which was natural, and perfectly became

her, for fear of giving occasion to those who lay in wait to deceive. But it was not possible here to make the least approach, but such as was full of honour ; and the distance she observed, and caution and judgment she was mistress of, protected her from all impertinent addresses, till she had made a choice without reproach and worthy her esteem, namely, of that excellent Person who was afterwards her Husband, after a passion of no less than nine long years, that they both had been the most entire and faithful lovers in the world. This was a space indeed of sufficient probation, nor will I presume to dive into the circumstances which made them be so long resolving, she being then, it seems, but very young, and both of a temper so extremely discreet. But as to the first Impressions, I will relate to your Ladyship what I have learned from herself, when sometimes she was pleased to trust me with diverse passages of her Life. For it was not possible I could hear of so long an Amour, so honourable a love and constant passion, and which I easily perceived concerned her, as looking upon herself unsettled, and one who had long since resolved not to make the Court her rest, but I must be touched with some Care for her. I would now and then kindly chide her, why she suffered those languish-

ments, when I knew not on whom to lay the blame. For though she would industriously conceal her disquiet, and divert it under the notion of the Spleen, she could not but acknowledge to me where the dart was fixed ; nor was anything more ingenuous than what she now writ me upon this Subject, by which your Ladyship will perceive, as with what peculiar confidence she was pleased to honour me, so with what early prudence and great piety she managed the passion, which, of all other, young people are commonly the most precipitate in and unadvised.

“ I came,” says she, “ so young, as I tell you, into the world (that is about 14 years of age,) where no sooner was I entered, but various opinions were delivered of me and the person whom you know was more favourable than the rest were to me, and did, after some time, declare it to me. The first thing which tempts young women is vanity, and I made that my great design. But Love soon taught me another Lesson, and I found the trouble of being tied to the hearing of any save him ; which made me resolve that either he or none should have the possession of your Friend. Being thus soon sensible of Love myself, I was easily persuaded to keep myself from giving him any

cause of Jealousy, and in so long a time never has there been the least.

“This, under God’s providence, has been the means of preserving me from many of those misfortunes young Creatures meet with in the world, and in a Court especially. At first we thought of nothing but living always together, and that we should be happy. But at last he was sent abroad by his Majesty, and fell sick, which gave me great trouble ; and I allowed more time for Prayer and the performance of holy duties than before I had ever done, and I thank God, found infinite pleasure in it, far beyond any other, and I thought less of foolish things that used to take up my time. Being thus changed myself, and liking it so well, I earnestly begged of God that he would impart the same satisfaction to him I loved ; it is done, (my friend) it is done, and from my soul I am thankful ; and though I believe he loves me passionately, yet I am not where I was : my place is filled up with HIM who is all in all. I find in him none of that tormenting passion to which I need sacrifice myself ; but still were we disengaged from the world, we should marry under such restraints as were fit, and by the agreeableness of our humour make each other happy. But at present there are obstruc-

tions : he must be perpetually engaged in business, and follow the Court, and live always in the world, and so have less time for the service of God, which is a sensible affliction to him ; wherefore, we are not determined to precipitate that matter, but to expect a while, and see how things will go ; having a great mind to be together, which cannot with decency be done without marrying, nor, to either of our satisfactions, without being free from the world. In short, serving of God is our end, and if we cannot do that quietly together we will asunder. You know our Saviour says, that all could not receive that doctrine, but to those who could, he gave no contradiction ; and if we can but pass our younger years, it is not likely we should be concerned for marrying when old. If we could marry now, I don't see but those inconveniencies may happen by sickness, or absence, or death. In a word, if we marry, it will be to serve God, and to encourage one another daily ; if we do not, it is for that end too ; and we know God will direct those who sincerely desire His love above all other Considerations. Now should we both resolve to continue as we are, be assured, I should be as little idle as if I were a wife. I should attend to prayer and all other Christian duties, and make these my pleasures,

seeing I choose not the condition out of restraint and singularity, but to serve God the better."

This being in answer to something I had written to her upon a serious debate, in which I had opposed a melancholy Resolution she would now and then entertain me with, of absolutely renouncing the thoughts of Marriage and wholly retiring in the world. I give you [it] in her own style and holy thoughts, as an Instance of that early piety and prudential weighing of things and circumstances, which accompanied all her actions ; nor could I have presented your Ladyship with a more illustrious part of her history nor more instructive.

In good earnest, this purpose of wholly vacating to Religion was at this time so imprinted in her, that whether she married or remained single, resolved she was to depart the Court. She had frequently told me, that Seven years was enough and too much to trifle any longer there : and, accordingly, one day that I least dreamt of it, she came expressly to my lodging and acquainted me with her Intention to go [and] live at Berkeley House, and that if she did alter her condition by Marriage, it should be when she was perfectly free, and had essayed how her detachment from royal servitude would comport with her before

she determined concerning another change. I happened to be with her in the Queen's withdrawing room, when a day or two after, finding her opportunity, and that there was less company, she begged leave of their Majesties to retire ; never shall I forget the humble and becoming address she made, nor the Joy that discovered itself in this Angel's countenance, above anything I had ever observed of transport in her, when she had obtained her suit ; for I must tell you, Madam, she had made some attempts before without success, which gave her much anxiety. Their Majesties were both unwilling to part with such a Jewel ; and I confess, from that time I looked upon Whitehall with pity, not to say Contempt. What will become, said I, of Corinthus, the City of Luxury, when the graces have abandoned it, whose piety and example is so highly necessary ? Astræa so left the lower world. And for my part, I never set my foot in it afterwards, but as entering into a solitude, and was ready to cry out with the wife of Phineas, that its glory was departed. She took, I assure you, her leave of their Majesties with so much modesty and good a Grace, that though they looked as if they would have a little reproached her for making so much haste, they could not find in their

hearts to say an unkind word to her ; but there was for all that, I am certain, something at the heart like grief ; and I leave you, Madam, to imagine how the rest of the Court mourned this Recess, and how dim the tapers burnt as she passed the ante-chamber. “ Is Mistress Blagge going,” says a fair creature ; “ why stay I here any longer ? ” others, “ that the Court had never such a Star in all its hemisphere ” ; and verily, I had not observed so universal a damp upon the spirits of every one that knew her. It was, I remember, on a Sunday night, after most of the company were departed, that I waited on her down to her Chamber, where she was no sooner entered, but falling on her knees, she blessed God as for a signal deliverance ; she was come out of Egypt, and now in the way to the Land of Promise. You will easily figure to yourself how busy the young Saint was the next morning in making up her little carriage to quit her prison : and when you have fancied the Conflagration of a certain City the Scripture speaks of, imagine this Lady trussing up her little fardel, like the two daughters whom the angel hastened and conducted ; but the similitude goes no further, for this holy Virgin went to Zoar, they to the cave of Folly and Intemperance ; there was no danger of her looking

back and becoming a Statue for sorrow of what she left behind. All her household stuff besides a Bible and a bundle of Prayer-books, was packed up in a very little Compass, for she lived so far from superfluity, that she carried all that was valuable in her person ; and though she had a courtly wardrobe, she affected it not, because everything became her that she put on, and she became everything was put upon her.

She took her leave of the Mother of the Maids as became her ; but she could not weep till your Ladyship's sister, whom she was still to leave in Captivity, fell on her neck, and then there fell mutual tears, that trickled down her Cheeks like the dew of Flowers, and made a lovely grief : to her and to your Ladyship she left her pretty Oratory, so often consecrated with her prayers and devotions, as to the only successors of her Virtues and Piety ; and as I am persuaded that the Court was every day less sensible of its loss whilst you both continued in it, because you trod in this Religious Lady's Steps, so the piety it anywhere still retains is accountable to your rare examples ; of such Importance is one Religious Person to a whole Society, and sometimes to a Nation.

But to return to her remove from Court. I am the more particular as having had the honour to wait

on her to Berkeley House ; I tell your Ladyship, I never beheld her more orient than she appeared at this time, and the moment she set foot in the Coach her eyes sparkled with Joy, and a marvellous lustre ; the Roses of her Cheeks were so fresh, and her countenance so gay, as if with the rest of her perfections (had she not left you two Sisters there) she had carried all the Beauties as well as all the Virtue of the Court away with her too. But ah, had you seen with what effusion and open arms she entered Berkeley House, and sprung into the caresses of my Lady, in what a trice after she was led up into her apartment she had put all her Equipage in order, ranged her Library, and disposed of her Compendious Inventory, you would have said there was nothing prettier than that busy moment. And now when she had consecrated her new Oratory with a devout Aspiration and the Incense of an humble Soul for the blessings of this sweet Retirement, she sat down and admired her sweet felicity. For, as I told your Ladyship, it was not altogether that she might be disengaged from Court that she designed to quit it ; but that she might vacate more to stricter duty. She believed that at Berkeley House she should be more at her own disposal ; that she should have nobody to observe but

God ; be mistress of her hours, and govern her affairs suitable to her devout Inclinations : and when she seriously required my opinion of it, I could not disapprove it. It brought to mind how in the declension of the Empire, and when the sins and vices of a licentious and abandoned age had alarmed the Roman world with a barbarous and universal war, like what was now upon the scene of Europe, that Paula and her daughter Eustochium (two rich and beautiful Ladies) quitted the splendour of a pompous Court for the Recesses of Bethlehem and the Solitudes of Judæa, and to prostrate themselves at the manger of a Divine Babe, and then at the foot of Calvary, where this holy Mother and beauteous Daughter spent the rest of their days in the recollection of their lives and the service of Jesus : methought nothing more ever resembled this Act of those Devotas than the heroic resolution of our Saint ; in this yet superior to theirs, as hers was spontaneous, theirs by the importunities of St. Hierome ; abandoning the Royal Circle, where she made up the constellations, for a Circle of real Stars, and to stand before the throne of the Lamb ; she deserts the glittering Balls and goes no more to the Theatre, that she may sing in the choir of Seraphins, and contemplate the celestial vision ; she cares not

for the sumptuous Entertainments, the Music, Masking, and Perfumes, to mortify her senses, and enjoy intellectual pleasures ; she neglects the gay and studious Dress, the Raillery and reputation of a Wit, which made her the life of Conversation and the pretty miracle of Court, that she may adorn her bright Soul, and converse with Angels ; she chooses rather to suffer diminution, and the censure of men as precise and singular ; to be a real Maid of Honour, than to have the name, and live in the scene of Temptation and the pleasures of Sin for a season : in a word, I fancied her called, as was Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees and from the Idols of Haran.

But as nothing on this side heaven is permanent long, she had not been in this imaginary and indeed sweet retirement, and where though one of the most magnificent palaces of the town, she had her apartment remote from the busy part of the house, and was rarely fitted for her purposes of devotion ; I say, it was not long, when partly from the necessity of Compliance with the Lady of the family, the continual and importune visits of the great persons which used to frequent that place, obliging her to tedious Ceremony and conversation that often interrupted her Course, and partly (from) other Circumstances, which for the

present seemed less favourable to their Intentions of marriage so soon, and the disquiet it put her to, she not only deliberated in good earnest, but resumed her former Inclination with more resolution than ever, of removing farther from these Impediments and altogether abandoning the world. I have really been touched in the deepest sense to see the Conflicts this devout Creature underwent, between her love and her devotion ; or shall I call them both her love ; for so they were ; a thousand times has she told me she would abide as she was, and then her pity for him who could not live in her absence, divided her afresh, and pierced her to the soul ; and when she was in the deepest of this Concern for him, nothing I have ever read in the Epistles of Seneca, had that excellent Stoic been indeed a Christian, appeared more divinely philosophical than the Topics she would use to divert his passion, and reason him into an indifference for her, when (of all things in the world,) it was not indifferent to her that he should have loved her less. But she had really that absolute Empire over her own affections, and such potent Inclinations to make God and Religion the business of her life, that as I said, she was many times upon the brink of resolving to abandon all the world : she believed that I who knew

love to be stronger than death, would never approve of this resolution ; and, therefore, she pretended at first only to make a visit to her sister the Lady Yarborough in Yorkshire, for a month or two during the summer ; but after that she could not conceal from me a further design of going from thence to Hereford, to live by herself under the direction of the Reverend Dean of that Cathedral, who had long been her spiritual father. This was the Zoar she often languished after, using that of righteous Lot, “ Is it not a little one, and my soul shall live.” “ Yes, my friend,” says she, “ in perfect liberty, without forms ; frugally, without contempt ; conveniently, without pomp ; at distance from the Bustle of the world, where I shall forget and be forgotten, be arbitress of my time, and serve God regularly ; choose my Conversation, and when I alter my Condition, do it with your advice ; which I am sure will never be to alter a purpose so reasonable, and so fit for one in my Circumstances.” Thus would this blessed Creature discourse it with me, whilst in the meantime she was balancing in herself when it came to a Resolution. “ The Lord help me, dear friend,” says she to me in another Letter, “ I know not what to determine ; sometimes I think one thing, sometimes another ; one

day I fancy no life so pure as the unmarried, another day I think it less exemplary, and that the married life has more opportunity of exercising Charity ; and then again, that it is full of solicitude and worldliness ; so as what I shall do, I know not. He can live without a wife willingly, but without me he is unwilling to live, so as if I do not marry he is not in danger of sin ; but if I or he or both should repent, O Lord and Governor of my life, leave me not to myself, to the Counsel of my [own] heart, but send me wisdom from Thy throne to direct, assist, and lead me soberly in my doings. Thou hast imparted to us reason for our guide ; but O rule Thou that reason, for without Thou conduct it, I shall be in perpetual hazard. Lord, I renounce all judgment, all knowledge, and discretion of my own ; I desire not to be a Child of this world, wise in their Generation, but to be a Fool that I may indeed be wise. I am in a strait and know not what to choose, determine Thou for me, O blessed Lord. Remember that for near these one and twenty years I have been Thy care, and I bless Thee for it. Thou hast frequently and wonderfully preserved me, both in spiritual and temporal dangers, and over and above hast done innumerable good things for me ; O leave me not now in this difficulty, but

once more be Thou my Counsellor, and whilst I live will I be Thy faithful, thankful servant. Say, Amen with me, dear friend."

Behold, Madam, the Letter, or rather the ejaculation which an heart entirely possessed with Religious Sentiments, made her dictate on this occasion ; nor should I have produced these particulars (con-credited to me in special Confidence) but to let you see, with how holy a design and consideration she proceeded ; and how infinitely different from the method of receiving addresses nowadays. Verily, when I reflect upon her youth, beauty, wit, the temptations and conflicts she sustained, to comply with the affection she had for her two rival loves (for so I again call them) I am half astonished, but you shall hear how passionately she describes it, and thus goes on :

"Much afflicted and in great agony was your poor friend this day, to think of the love of the holy Jesus, and yet be so little able to make Him any return. For with what favour have I protested against all affection to the things of this world ; resigned them all without exception ; when the first moment I am tried, I shrink away, and am passionately fond of the Creature, and forgetful of the Creator ! This, when I considered, I fell on my knees, and with many tears,

begged of God to assist me with His grace, and banish from me all Concern but that of heavenly things, and wholly to possess my heart Himself; and either relieve me in this Conflict, now so long sustained, or continue to me Strength to resist it, still fearing if the combat cease not in time, I should repine for being put upon so hard a duty. But then again, when I call to mind the Grace of Self-denial, the honour of suffering for my Saviour, the Reward proposed for those that conquer, the delight I shall conceive in seeing and enjoying Him, the happiness of the life above, I that am thus feeble, thus fearful, call, (out of exercise of his Grace,) yea, for tribulation, for persecution, for contradictions to my own desires, and for everything agreeable to the Spirit and displeasing to the flesh. Thus, with St. Paul, when I am weak then am I strong; when I am in sorrow then am I rejoicing; one whom I love is here, but I am got to other Company, and well have I been regaled, for God has been very gracious to me; most bitterly have I wept to think how much of my heart he has, how little my blessed Saviour, who has loved and suffered for me so much more; happy, ah happy, are you my friend, that are past that mighty love to the Creature. But I make this my humble confession

to God and you, bewailing my loving anything but Himself; imploring Him to translate my affections, and place them on Him alone. Thus to you do I display my grief; I can leave him whom here I love, to go to my Jesus for ever; but I confess, it is hard for me to leave him now so often as I do, and this breaks my heart, that after so many solemn professions to God, what I would do for Him, I should with such reluctance part from this person, to pray, and to read, and to go to holy duties.

“Now, dear friend, should I marry, and refuse to go to my Lord, part unwillingly, or refuse him, what would become of me? No, No, I will remain my Saviour’s; he shall be my love, my husband, my all; I will keep my Virgin, present it unto Christ, and not put myself into the temptation of loving anything in Competition with my God.”

Thus far this devout and tender Creature: nor this the last wherein she has conjured me to advise what she should resolve on, when often her heart as I said, has been divided between her lover’s, as was St. Paul’s in another case, even wishing to be dissolved, that she might be with Christ, and freed from all this solicitude, as she has frequently expressed it to me. And now what was I to return? truly I was myself

also sometimes divided in my thoughts. She had perpetual Inclinations to retire from all the world, especially apprehending that by any secular circumstances, she might possibly remain in a doubtful condition, and the resolution was once so strongly fixed, that with no small difficulty I opposed it. Being so fully persuaded as I was, that they would be exceeding blessings to one another, rare examples of the conjugal state, and that nothing could hinder the pursuit of an holy life and the love of God, so much as this pendulous and uncertain condition, whilst marriage she would find compose her devout spirit, and improve it, I told her, she was not free, as I conceived, to resolve so peremptorily ; that it was to do violence to one whom she acknowledged could not live without her ; nay, that if to comply with her, he put constraint upon himself, she should not do well, since his Action in this Case ought to be as free as her own ; and that she should do a much nobler and [more] self-denying thing, to prefer the satisfaction of so worthy a creature before her own. I consented to all her Elogies of the Virgin State, but that there were no less due the Conjugal ; and that if there were some temptations in it, her merits would be the greater, and the exercise of her virtue ;

circled indeed it was with some tolerable thorns, but rewarded with illustrious Coronets for the good it produced ; that as to the opportunities of serving God, an active life was preferable to the Contemplative ; and that I should not doubt to see as many crowned in heaven who had been married, as of Virgins : since from Marriage all the Virgins in the world had their original, and all the Saints that ever were or ever shall be ; that it was the Seminary of the Church and care of Angels ; and that [though] our beloved [Lord] were born of a Virgin, she was yet veiled under the Cover of Marriage ; and so when St. Paul exalted the Celibate above it, for the advantages he enumerates, it was not to derogate from Marriage, but because of the present distress and the impediments of a family to an itinerant and persecuted Apostle, and those who in that Conjunction had no certain abode. That as to the perfection and Purity of the State, it was one thing to be married to a Man, and another to a Husband ; to the first indeed, most of the world were joined, to the second, none but the Religious. That as it was instituted in Paradise, and dignified by our blessed Saviour's presence ; compared to the most intimate Endearments of Christ to His Church, it was often

blessed with extraordinary prosperity even in this world. That the fidelity, society, mutual affection, and instance of religious Marriages, the regularity of their Charity, and hospitality of their families, was emulous of the highest pretences of the Virgin and more solitary Condition. Do you (would I say) esteem it no honour to have given Saints to the Church, and useful members to the State in which you live ; and that you can be hospitable to strangers, institute your Children, give instruction to your servants, example to the neighbours, and be the parent of a thousand other blessings ? I remembered her of what sometimes she would say, that if she married and had no Children, she should be displeased ; and if she had, she might have either too many, or too wicked and untoward ; this, I told her, was to distrust God's providence, and she did not well to make those reflections ; when in all events there was exercise of faith, and patience, industry, and other graces ; and that she would not be happy unless she was alone, not considering that the few may be as well fools, as vicious,—which is worse ; and that one of the many may recompense all her care for the rest ; that if she who bare her had been of that mind, there would have been one less Saint to glorify God ; that

I should have wanted an excellent friend, and so would many others, who now blessed God for the Charities she did them. Upon all these Topics I challenged her humility, her faith, and her love. I laid before her how much more affected, morose, covetous, obnoxious to temptation and reproach an old Maid would be, who was known to have engaged her affection already, than one who had never entertained an address. Then the trouble and sorrow of bringing forth and expense of a family, would at another time affright her ; little women, I told her, had little pain ; and that Queens had endured as much with patience and cheerfulness ; that as to great fortunes and support, opulent couples were not exempted from Cares ; and that though I was assured God had great blessings of that kind also in reserve, yet sour provisions and less Ambition, were as happy in the mutual affection of each other, where there was a Competency for the present, and so fair a prospect for the future : in a word, that there was something so patriarchal (not to say despotic) and Royal in a well governed family, and worthy marriages, that I could not but give it pre-eminence to all she had objected. These were the conflicts we had on this subject, and the difficulties she suggested, where, I

plainly told her, it was by no means agreeable to her piety, nor to the Equity of the thing, that any less consideration than the foresight of inevitable ruin, should suspend her resolutions of giving herself to a deserving person whose approaches had been so honourable, and whom she confessed she loved above all the world. There is certainly nothing more calamitous, than where love (as they call it) drives the bargain, and passion blinds the Man ; but so the young things precipitate, and the giddy are entangled, and when the fancy cools, repentance succeeds, and it ends in aversion and anxiety. But these Calentures concerned not this excellent Couple, and such a Conjugation of likely circumstances. I would tell her it was not enough to be happy alone, when she might make another so ; or ought she to resolve not to alter her Condition till she was out of reach of accidents ; that it became a cruel and ill-natured Laban to exact a double apprenticeship for a Rachel ; that it was Saul that put David to adventure for a wife ; that the heroic times were now antiquated, and people proceeded by gentler and more compendious methods ; and the decencies of her sex, and custom of the nation, and the honour of the condition, and the want of Monasteries and pious Recesses obliged

her to marry. Marry then in God's name, said I, since my advice you ask : it is finally what I think you ought to resolve on ; though if I studied my own satisfaction, I should rather promote this aversion, and seek to fortify your suspicion ; for as I profess it the greatest Contentment of my life that you have vowed me your friendship so solemnly, and that you will be constant, whilst I incite you to marry, I endanger and put it to the hazard ; for perhaps your husband may be jealous, though without cause ; or he may have particular dislike to me, or may not be noble, free, and ingenious, or may make you unhappy otherwise, which would be the greatest affliction could happen to me ; whereas, continuing as you are, mistress of yourself and your conversation, your virtue and my years, and the conscience of my duty, and both our discretions, will preserve our friendship honourable, pious, and useful. In sum, I said nothing upon Marriage, but what I could unravel to the advantage of virginity,—the ease of a single life, the opportunities of doing more good, of serving God better, of prolonging life—by example and precept from Scripture, from Fathers, from Legends and Histories, and present her such a lovely picture of that state, which approaches next the nature of Angels,

(who neither marry nor are given in marriage) as would have brought her to more than a suspense, or requiring farther advice : she would have needed no farther argument to render her more unkind to Hymen, and to the repose of one who she knew I pitied ; and, therefore, I ever persuaded her against the Recess she so often was threatening, as a thing singular and of little advantage. I applauded her recourse to assiduous and humble prayer ; that God would direct her for the best, and that after all I had said and written to her, she would make that her Oracle ; being confident that God, who had hitherto taken such signal care of her, would not suffer her to miscarry in this Concern. For I could not endure to see her always in a doubtful and uncertain condition, because it could be profitable for neither ; for when she had seriously consulted her friends, she had done all that was required ; and since it could not but be their universal suffrage she was to acquiesce, I therefore advised her, that in case she still resolved to live as she was, it should be but for a time, without imposing on herself ; and so from time to time, as Circumstances might be, but till then mind her health ; for she began to look pale and lean, and had been too negligent of herself, which I reproved her

for. But this did not [have] altogether the effect,—she rejoins, and writes to me from Twickenham thus :—

“ 26th July.

“Your advice I like, and all you say on both subjects ; yet am still where I was, wishing to live alone, as a thing most suitable to my humour, and the nearest way to heaven ; nor can you blame one so weak as I am, to choose that path which will soonest bring me to my Journey’s end. However, I shall observe your Rules, and so far your counsel, as not to determine anything rashly, till he give me free leave to do it. In the meantime, if you approve of it, that the world may not think by my growing lean, as you say, I leave it with regret, for the time I stay here, I intend to take care of my health, and drink the Cow’s milk in the Morning, and because I am not to sleep immediately upon it, my Maid shall read to me some divine Subject ; then rise and finish my private duties, then pray with my Servants, and be dressed by eleven, and so have time before prayers to read a Chapter with other duties ; note and collect something out of what I read. At six in the Evening I will repeat my Course again, and after that learn such things by heart as I gladly would retain ; after

Supper pray with my people and by myself, my Maid reading to me whilst I am undressing, and then lay me down in peace. This is the method I intend for ordinary days, not Fridays, when you know I am to fast, and spend it entirely with God ; or Sundays, [when] I will rise early and employ it with as much devotion as I can ;—this is, I say, the course I purpose here, if you approve of it ; for the rest, eat my meat heartily, and comply with the conversation of the Family ; though I all this time wish extremely that I were settled, where I need use none of these Impertinencies, the observances and ceremonies of visits, formal meals, &c. to the expense of my time ; but wholly attend on God, night and day. Nor should I dare yet to indulge myself this liberty, did I at all please myself in it as formerly I had done ; or that I intend to continue it above 3 months at furthest, if I change not my Condition, which is to marry (as you would have me) and become worldly. So as by the end of Summer, I shall be free, and then none will consider my looks, nor shall I be concerned if they do, at the distance of my retreat. Pray let me know what you think of all this. I was this day very devout, but not tender, and I hope it was as well, for I thank God I have made good resolutions.”

This being the substance of her letter in reply to one of mine, your Ladyship may perceive, as, how devoutly this blessed Virgin, (for so must I call her,) spent her time in that delicious place, and amongst such a Confluence of Visitants, &c., so how her heart was bent upon her Northern Recess, to which I was so averse ; and I was confident she would not long have enjoyed herself in it ; nor could the distance of Herefordshire have worn him out of her thoughts, which that of France and Spain could not do. The truth is, I did heartily pity that worthy Gentleman, and saw no reason in the world why they should not both be happy in each other, and my friend composed, without taking any extraordinary or singular course ; though on the other hand, when I considered through what difficulties and reluctances, this tender creature, now in the flower of her beauty, wit, and reputation at court, would sacrifice all to God, I could hardly abstain from crying out :—O magnanimous Virgin, I applaud your design, I approve, I admire your choice ; I magnify your example ; it is great, it is illustrious, because it is the better part, and formed upon just consideration ; you have weighed it long, and enquired of God. I allow, I allow, and even envy your purpose. O sweet repose

of a devout soul, the flames of celestial love, the fruition of Jesus, the antepasts of Heaven, what shall I call, what shall I name it ? Consummate felicity who has none to fear, none to serve, none to love but God ! But whilst you are made free, why leave you me behind, entangled in the world ! Whilst you are in the light, I [am] in darkness and a chaos. For when you are gone, what is the Court or Country to your friend ! I shall see you no more in the Circle, nor join voices with you in the Choir, nor visit your holy cell ; with you our Joys are departed ; receive me then from this hateful abode ; and beg of God, that the circumstances of my life being composed, I, who emulate, may imitate your example, and devote the remainder of my few days to Eternity ; or at least while I am to converse here below, (for you are gone from the Earth) may I live in the contemplation of your virtues, and be a part of your intercessions. Go then, my holy friend, when you please, and be happy.

Madam, you may possibly imagine this a romantic folly, or the transport of some lover ; but I assure you, they were the dictates of my mind and heart, whilst I was counselling her to stay and to marry ; for, though I thought this more expedient, I could not

but pronounce that the more perfect and extraordinary well. Thus she continued at Twickenham, as it were in probation, for the most part retired, and sometimes in conversation. He often came to visit her, and that broke her heart if he abstained from coming. She was still uneasy ; so after some weeks, she returns to London, with full resolution of beginning her Journey, and the very day was prefixed ; but when it approached, indeed it was not possible to pacify my Lady Berkeley ; who being to lose the most sweet and agreeable companion in the world, employed all that friendship, love, and passion could inspire for the changing her resolution ; and the Convulsion was so sensible to them both, that she was forced to give way to her Importunities, and deliberate on it some longer time. Nor was it altogether in the consideration of my Lady alone, that she suffered herself to be prevailed on ; there were others whom (when it came to the Test) she was unwilling to leave for so long a time, and so great a distance, and among them, I should be strangely ungrateful, not to acknowledge the share I had in her thoughts and excellent nature, when I shall acquaint you of the Resolution she had to take a little house at Greenwich ; and I had commission from her to find out a place

whither she might retire to, without quite going as it were out of the world, into the North ; not being able, as she affirmed, to comply any longer with the receiving and paying impertinent visits, and other avocations and circumstances, which took up all her time at London, though with a Lady who so much esteemed her. I confess, I was not forward to promote this design, not only because I thought [it] inconvenient for a Lady so young, and who was already disposed to a more than ordinary reservedness, to cherish the humour ; but that it would appear like something over singular in her, and prejudicial to her health. I proposed therefore, her accepting the best accommodation I could give her, and she had certainly spent some considerable time with my wife, and retired to the little Cell, where your Ladyship has sometimes found her, but my Lady Berkeley could not suffer this Eclipse, or endure that she should go from her with any patience. It was on this that she writes me thus at large what conflicts she had endured ; and at the close :—" My best friend ; as to my being in your family, it was almost, and ah ! that it had not been almost, but altogether ; for whatever you think, it is hard for me to describe how sorry I am to be thus far from so dear a friend ; and you

don't know that I have given over several other proposals of settling myself, when that thought comes into my head, that I shall be a great way from you, unless I continue where I am at least for some months, till God is pleased to dispose of me one way or other."

But whilst she was in this uncertainty and suspense where she should fix, and that the winter began to approach, there was a play to be acted at Court before their Majesties, wherein none were to be Actors but persons of the most illustrious quality; the Lady Mary, since Princess of Orange, the Duchess of Monmouth, and all the shining beauties; and it was not possible to leave her out, who had upon the like solemnity formerly, and when she was Maid of Honour, acquitted herself with so universal applause and admiration; and verily, never was anything more charming and more a divertisement, than to hear her at any time recite, or read a Dramatic Poem. She had not only a most happy memory, but exquisite Judgment, and could add those motions to her voice, as gave what she pronounced the greatest sweetness and grace imaginable. This, though she would heretofore and but rarely have done for diversion, and amongst friends, the

most innocent in the world, she had now entirely taken leave of, and but in compliance with some great Ladies (whom she could not decently refuse) did she willingly see a play at the Theatre ; and therefore, to be now herself an Actress, though among such an assembly of noble persons, was to put a mortification on her, that cost her not only great reluctancy, but many tears. But there was no refusing ; the King and Duke had laid their Commands upon her to bear a part with the Lady Mary, and others of illustrious name. I came often to her when she was reciting, and am witness with what extreme regret, and how unwelcome to her this honour was. But she had at this moment also another affair in hand, which more imported her, and the difficulty in compassing that which solely by His Majesty's favour was to be obtained, disposed her the more reasonably to comply. She had ever since her Recess from Court lived in expectation of the present which of course their Majesties used to make to the Maids of Honour, who having waited a competent time upon the Queen, do either marry or withdraw from Court with their Royal permission ; and now had she newly solicited the Duke to bespeak my Lord Treasurer about it, who gave her kind

words, but told her he must have the King's particular direction in it, but in the meanwhile was not forward to put his Majesty in mind of it ; and there was nothing to which she had a greater aversion than the importuning great persons in her own behalf for Civility, which did not flow naturally from those in whose power it lay to oblige her. "I perceive," says she, in a letter to me, written 22nd September, on this occasion, "that my business makes no advance, and that where I least expected difficulty I find the greatest. The King says nothing to my Lord Treasurer, nor my Lord to him ; so that for aught I perceive, it is likely to depend thus a long time : well, God's will be done, as in Heaven, so on Earth ; in the meantime I am extremely heavy, for I would be free from that place, and have nothing to do in it at all ; but it will not be, for the play goes on mightily, which I hoped would never have proceeded farther. Dear friend, I beg your prayers this cloudy Weather, that God would endow me with patience and resignation. Would you believe it, there are some that envy me the honour (as they esteem it) of acting in this play, and pass malicious Jests upon me ! Now you know I am to turn the other Cheek, nor take I notice of it."

See the humility of this excellent Creature, who you so well knew looked on this occasion as one of her greatest afflictions, and would have devolved the share she had in this Court Magnificence on any other Lady with a thousand acknowledgments, had their Majesties but excused her ; but there was no retreating ; she had her part assigned her, which, as it was the most illustrious, so never was there any performed with more grace, and becoming the solemnity. She had on her that day near twenty thousand pounds value of Jewels, which were more set off with her native beauty and lustre than any they contributed of their own to hers ; in a word, she seemed to me a Saint in Glory, abstracting her from the Stage. For I must tell you, that amidst all this pomp and serious impertinence, whilst the rest were acting, and that her part was sometimes to go off, as the scenes required, into the tiring room, where several Ladies, her companions, were railing with the Gallants triflingly enough till they were called to re-enter, she, under pretence of conning her next part, was retired into a Corner, reading a book of devotion, without at all concerning herself or mingling with the young Company ; as if she had no further part to act, who was the principal person of

the Comedy ; nor this with the least discernible affectation, but to divert and take off her thoughts from the present vanity, which from her soul she abhorred. I mention the passage as a singular work of her real piety, and to show how she continually applied her mind on all occasions, and how little transported with those splendid follies and gay entertainments which usually take up so much of the precious time which is given us to work out our Salvation. I need not enlarge upon the argument of the Poem, which you may be sure, however defective in other particulars, was exactly modest, and suitable to the Persons, who were all of the first rank and most illustrious of the Court : nor need I recount to your Ladyship with what a surprising and admirable air she trod the Stage, and performed her Part, because she could do nothing of this sort, or anything else she undertook, indifferently, but in the highest perfection. But whilst the whole Theatre were extolling her, she was then in her own Eyes, not only the humblest, but the most diffident of herself, and least affecting praise.

Thus ended the Play, but so did not her affliction, for a disaster happened which extremely concerned her, and that was the loss of a Diamond of consider-

able value, which had been lent her by the Countess of Suffolk ; the Stage was immediately swept, and diligent search made to find it, but without success, so as probably it had been taken from her, as she was oft environed with that infinite Crowd which it is impossible to avoid upon such occasion. But the loss was soon repaired, for His Royal Highness understanding the trouble she was in, generously sent her wherewithal to make my Lady Suffolk a present of so good a Jewel. For the rest of that day's triumph, I have a particular account still by me of the rich Apparel she had on her, amounting, besides the Pearls and Precious Stones, to above three hundred pounds, but of all which she immediately disposed herself, so soon as ever she could get clear of the Stage. Without complimenting any Creature, or trifling with the rest, who stayed the collation and refreshment that was prepared, away she slips like a Spirit to Berkeley House, and to her little Oratory ; whither I waited on her, and left her on her knees, thanking God that she was delivered from this vanity, and with her Saviour again. Never, says she, will I come within this temptation more whilst I breathe.

And thus Mistress Blagge took her leave of the pomp

and glory of the world, and with fresh resolutions that if other circumstances did not intervene, namely, such as might so alter her condition as decently to countenance her longer stay in these Parts, she would yet betake herself to her designed retreat. She was not satisfied that those who could not but take notice what Person it was she preferred before all the world, should speak of her withdrawing from Court, and living now so long near it without proceeding any further, though divers could not be driven from the opinion that she was already married. It is certain that excellent Man could never think of parting with her, nor she herself from so many Friends besides, as infinitely valued her ; but unless he could also decently have taken himself from Court, which was the thing they both projected and desired, that they might wholly quit all dependencies which interrupted their living together, but which for many prudent considerations had been inconvenient for him as yet, she was not easily persuaded to linger here and be upon uncertainties, who had all along in her eye the modelling of her life, so as not to be obliged to those compliances she was of necessity to undergo in a station so near to the Court, unless Mr. G. should fix on firm Employment as might not

only countenance her stay and marrying, but render other circumstances easy likewise: though, as I said, there was nothing which they both did breathe after more than to have settled somewhere remote in the Country, from all Entanglements of the World. Thus far she had pleased herself to acquaint me with her most intimate concerns. I do not affirm that to obviate some objections of hers he meditated on the purchase of that honourable Office which he afterwards succeeded in, but the Master of the Robes now Earl of Rochester, discovering his intention, about this time to part with that place, might, in my opinion, be an inducement with them to marry, and rather trust God with the event of things, than give the World occasion, after so long expectation, to think she made a retreat out of rashness or discontent: wherefore upon the 16th of May, which was Ascension Day, they both married together in the Temple Church, by the Reverend Doctor Lake, one of His Royal Highness' Chaplains, my Lady Berkeley and a Servant of the Bride's only being present, and I think nobody else, both the blessed Pair receiving the holy Sacrament, and consecrating the Solemnity with a double Mystery.

Her not acquainting me with this particular of a

good while after, occasioned a friendly quarrel between us, that she who had entrusted me for many years with all her concerns, nay her greatest Inclinations, and upon occasion not only named me for the particular Friend that should be witness of her Marriage, but give her to her Husband, should now with such Industry conceal it from me. And now I will tell your Ladyship how I could not but discover it, for no sooner was the Knot tied, but she one day desired I would let her peruse all the Letters I had of hers, and which she knew I too religiously reserved, not that she could be conscious of having ever written that to me which might not have passed the severest Eye, but because there being in many of them professions of the sincerity and holy friendship that an excellent Soul (and such as hers was) could express, they might by any accident possibly fall into hands that profane everything, and most, [the] innocent and virtuous ; I failed not to transmit them to her, nor she to return them, as indeed finding nothing in them which should cause her to deprive me of a Treasure she knew I so infinitely valued ; nor could I believe that though she had given [herself] to so worthy a Person she designed by sending for her Letters to break with me, as

Ladies use to do with unfortunate Rivals, for thus she accompanies her Packet :—

“My Friend, This being Tuesday, a day which long since you know has belonged to a Friend of mine, I have put together all the Letters, Papers, and other Fragments, excepting Meditations, which I think you have copies of, and among which are some Prayers of mine, and all your Books ; only that you last sent me, and I am now reading, of the Inter-course between Christ and the Soul, I desire to retain, because now and then I am much pleased and softened with some passages of it ; and now I have this day prayed your prayers, thought your thoughts, wished, I dare say, your wishes, which were that I might every day set looser and looser to the things of this World, discerning, as every day I do, the folly and vanity of it : how short all its Pleasures, how trifling all its Recreations, how false most of its Friendships, how transitory everything in it ; and on the contrary, how sweet the Service of God, how delightful the meditating on His Word, how pleasant the Conversation of the Faithful, and above all, how charming Prayer, how glorious our Hopes, how gracious our God is to all His Children, how gentle His Corrections, and how frequently by the first

Invitations of His Spirit, He calls us from our low Designs to those great and noble ones of serving Him, and attaining eternal happiness ; these have been this Day's Thoughts and Employment ; for my Lady Hamilton being here, and some Friends at Cards, I have had the whole day to myself. Rejoice with me, my Friend, and be exceeding glad, for so it becomes us whenever we have opportunity of serving Him."

And now, Madam, by this, which accompanied the redition of her Letters, your Ladyship may conclude what Courtship there used to pass between us ; however, her solicitude thus for them on a sudden might well give me umbrage, and I was resolved to live under an affected Ignorance, assured by knowing, and as afterwards I learned, that this niceness could never proceed from herself, but from some other prevalent obligation ; and I ever esteemed it an Impertinence to be over curious, when I found there was design of concealment, and should have much wondered at it of her to me, but that I was so perfectly acquainted with her Virtues ; whereof one, and that none of the least care in her sex, was that whenever she was under a promise of Secrecy, nothing in the World could unlock her Bosom,

or slack her resolution. A Secret was indeed a Secret when committed to her : and yet again, when I called to mind the reiterated Promises she had made me never to alter her condition without advising with me, I was sometimes in suspense of my Conjectures, and would often reproach myself for the Suggestion. Nor did this a little confirm me that she was not married, that my Lady Berkeley now upon her going with her Husband, designed Ambassador Extraordinary to the Court of France, and Plenipotentiary at the famous Treaty of Nimeguen, she solemnly consulted me about her accompanying her Ladyship to Paris, and staying there with her some competent time, to see how God would dispose of things. I must acknowledge I was not so averse from this proposal of hers, as hoping it might divert her melancholy design and hank[ering] after Herefordshire, and since my son, then but a Youth, had importuned me to let him travel, I was the easier inclined to gratify him, upon the assurance I had of the great care she would have of him, since he was not only to accompany her in the way, but be in the same House with her, and in all things enjoined to follow her directions. Nor ever could he have had so blessed an opportunity of improving himself ;

this little self-interest obtained on me, I confess, at that time, but such as I would most willingly have sacrificed, could I have prevailed with her to stay without pursuing her Northern Journey, where [the] abandoning herself to Solitude must soon have ruined her health and made her unhappy.

This excursion then concluded on, and lying entirely upon me for her Provisions and Supplies abroad, her mind seemed to be much at ease, but it was some Months that this resolution was taken ere they set forth, and all this time, I am persuaded, she and her Husband lived with the same reserves that the Angels do in Heaven, not thinking fit to cohabit till they declared their Marriage, which for reasons best known to themselves they did not do till she came back from France again. In this interim, and towards the latter end of June, she did me the honour to pass a fortnight at my little Villa, and brought me a Letter of Attorney to transact all her concerns during her absence, as looking now every Day when my Lord Berkeley would be dispatched and enter on his Journey ; when, behold, upon the 27th a Fit of an Apoplexy seizing on him as he was sitting at the Council Table at Whitehall, and continuing on him all that night, without the least appearance of releasing him

from its mortal effects, or if that might be possible, of ever restoring him to tolerable sense and vigour, banished all thoughts of Embassies, and consequently of our going into France. But God was more gracious to him, for the Physicians had beyond all expectations, and even amidst despair, brought him not only out of this fatal Paroxysm, but after some time to so much strength (though in most men's opinions not perfectly restored to his memory and abilities) as nothing would divert him from his intended progress. On the 10th of November his Excellency set forth with his Train, my son and I accompanying them the first day to Sittingbourne; for in regard of his Lordship's indisposition they made but easy Journeys. Canterbury was our next night's repose; when in the Morning, after we had been at Prayers in the Cathedral, Mistress Godolphin and I walking alone together, she declared to me what exceeding regret she was in to leave her Friends. Not without many tears I expostulated with her, why she would go then: I am engaged, says she, to my Lady Berkeley, who tells me I break her Heart if I forsake her, and you see in what condition her Lord is, and poor Woman, what would become of her if he should die, and she have never a Friend by her? nor would

I have People think I retire out of any other respect. But, Mr. E., if ever I return again, and do not marry, I will still retire, and end my Days among you, and you are like to have the share of the trouble : for she had often said she would divide her Life among her Friends, and did me the honour to put me into the Rank of one of the first.

This, Madam, was the only time that in her Life she ever prevaricated with me, and covered it with that address ; and was, I am most assured, in deepest sorrow, as all my former suspicions of her being married vanished. Do you not think, says she, that it afflicts me to the Soul to part with you, and from one who I am sure you believe I love entirely, and leave in my Condition ? This, uttered with a flood of sorrow, I was not able to sustain without reciprocal kindness and tenderness. But the time now called us to break off this Conversation, the saddest that in my Life I ever saw [her] in ; she had left her Heart at another Place, and with one that therefore did not accompany her, because he was of a tender nature, and durst not trust his passion, whilst their Design was to conceal their relation. We arrived this evening at Dover, where, after Supper, calling me into her Chamber, she signed and delivered me

her Will, before her Maid, wherein she had me her Administrator ; for it seems her Husband had empowered her to dispose of what she pleased, and as she pleased, as afterwards she told me : this done, she desired I would pray with her, and so I left her, as full of Sorrow as she could hold.

Early the next Morning I waited on her again, and again she fell into the same resentments ; and that now she was so near the time when she must be separated from them she loved. I know not how, said I, you part from your Lover, but never may you feel what it is to part from a Friend. I believe there is one that you really love, and that it is mutual ; how is it then you thus go from him, and he from you ? This is strange proceedings ;—it is spiritual, it is high, it is mysterious and singular ; but find it a name if you can, for I confess I understand it not : do you preserve serenity of mind, and yet continue languishing ? Nothing is in nature so repugnant as Love and absence, where nothing forbids the object to be present. O heroic Souls, if you think to be at ease, I shall be glad ; but greatly obliged to learn the Secret, and be taught to bear this Divulsion with as little pain, since I know of no Engagement you have to go from your Friends and those whom you profess to

love ! Go back, go back then, and be happy both, for this Course will wear you both out, if really you love him. For goodness' sake do not break my Heart, (says she), you see I am engaged ; and then she wept and wore such a cloud of Sorrow all that Morning, that she could hardly speak a word when I led her down to the Company, now preparing to go on board. It was upon the 13th of November that upon the Beach we took solemn leave, and I should discover too much of my weakness to express the trouble I was in, to see her overwhelmed with grief that she could not speak one word ; but thus she was carried into the Yacht, when being a little launched into the Sea, the Fort from the Castle gave his Excellency 17 Guns, and was answered with five, according to the Form.

I recount this passage to your Ladyship more minutely, as being the most passionate and most mysterious ; nor will I therefore make any reflections on it than what I am persuaded your Ladyship must do, and then conclude them with admiration how two Persons that loved each other so entirely, could support a Divorce so long ; or what might be the Cause, if any other there were, but a singular and extreme niceness not to come together, which they

might be suspected to do, however to appearance they lived reserved, till they publicly avowed their Marriage, which you may remember they forbore till they had made their Families and Equipage complete.

On the 5th of December, she wrote me word of their safe arrival at Paris, and how they had disposed of themselves ; together with an Account of my Lord Ambassador's magnificent Entry and Audience at the French Court, with other pompous Circumstances, which yet so little concerned this admirable Creature, that she would not only be no Spectator of it, but not so much as once appeared at Court all the time of her being at the Ambassador's House. And though the Report of such a Beauty and Wit had so forerun her arrival by some who had known her in the Circle at Court that the French King was desirous to see her in that at Saint Germain's ; yet she so ordered matters as to avoid all occasions of going thither, and came back to England without giving that great Monarch the satisfaction of one glance, or herself of the Splendour or Vanity of his Court ; which is so singular a Note in her sex, and of one naturally so curious and observing, that I cannot pass it over without a just remark, especially being a Lady so infinitely complaisant, and of a nature so obliging, Mistress also of the

French Tongue to such perfection, as rendered her capable of entertaining Persons of the highest quality : nor was this reservedness out of humour or singularity. She now considers herself a married Woman, and though she went over to accompany my Lady, there was no necessity for her to appear at Court, where the virtues of strangers did not always protect the Sex from Inconveniences ; and she was resolved to give no occasion to be talked of or admired. All the Time she could redeem from those Civilities she owed my Lady, and which now begun to be very tedious to one whose Heart was in another Country, she spent in Devotion, reading excellent Books, and conversing with some few of her Acquaintance, but without gratifying her curiosity by going out to see the many rarities which the famous City she was in invites all strangers to, unless it were that of her going one afternoon to a Cloister of Nuns ; whose manner of living did not displease her, whilst nothing of their Superstition could endanger one so well principled in her Religion. I will give your Ladyship a transcript of the first Letter sent me after her arrival at Paris, to confirm it :—

“ My Friend, I promised you an Account of our Journey hither ; there was nothing in it of extra-

ordinary, no ill accident, nothing like Pinto's Travels. Since I came to Paris, I have hardly been out of doors to visit anybody, but there has been a Priest to visit me ; but without Vanity, I think I said as much for my Opinion as he did for his. I am now reading Monsieur Claude's Défence de la Reformation, and like it most exceedingly ; so as you need have no fear of me on that side. God knows, the more one sees of their Church, the more one finds to dislike in it ; I did not imagine the tenth part of the Superstition I find in it, yet still could approve of their Orders. Their Nunneries seem to be holy Institutions ; if they are abused it is not their fault : what is not perverted ? Marriage itself is become a snare, and people seem to dispose of their Children young, lest the remedy increase the disease ; but when I have commended that bail of theirs, I have said for them, I think, all that reasonably can be said. One thing I must tell you, Friend, People can have the Spleens here in Paris, let them say what they will of the Air ; but if Arithmetic will cure it, I am going with my Charge, your Son, to be a very hard Student, and we intend to be very wise."

I present you, Madam, with this Fragment of a Letter, to show your Ladyship how she spent her

Time, when she could redeem it from Compliances with the Company, and the Decencies of such Visits as were not to be resisted where Persons of Quality came to see her ; but of which she grew so weary at last—and for another reason you may conjecture,—as within a Month or two of her arrival, this excellent Creature was quite sick of France.

“I am weary,” says she, in another Letter to me of the 4th of February, “of my Life ; I have here no time for my Soul. Cards we play at four Hours every Day ; who-ever comes to visit, I must be by to interpret ; wherever a certain Lady goes if my Lady H. be not at hand, I must trudge ; so that poor I can scarce say my Prayers, and seldom or never read. Dear Friend, pray heartily, that if it be God’s will, I may be restored to my own People, and to my God ; for though He be everywhere, I cannot call upon Him as I was wont at home : therefore for God’s sake pray that I may speedily and once again worship Him in His Congregation, and enjoy the assistance of His Grace, the presence of my best Friends, whom as my Life I love. I could content myself with anything, I think, were I once at home. But I must do nothing rashly ; I hope yet in God through your Prayers, and my own firm Resolutions ;

to get home as soon as ever I can, being quite wearied with dedicating myself perpetually to other People. It is almost one o'Clock ere I can get to Bed, so that in the Morning I am not able to rise before Eight, and passing then an Hour in Prayer and Psalms, and an Hour and a half in reading, sometimes one Book, sometimes another, by the time I am dressed Public Prayers begin ; then follows Dinner, then Talk till 3, then go to Public Prayers, then prate again, God knows, till Six o'Clock, and then with much difficulty get away to pray, for myself, for you, and some other, then am I called to Cards till Bedtime. O pity, pity me, dear Friend !”

I shall need repeat no more of her sad laments ; divers have I by me, and yet it was still more for this interruption of her assiduous course and devotion than for any other consideration. She looks upon it as an Exile from the House of God, which like holy David, was to her intolerable. Even amongst the circumstances of splendour, ease, and worldly diversion, she had been made believe she should be as much Mistress of her retirements at Paris as she was wont to be at Berkeley House : though neither there was she at the Liberty she breathed after, Devotion, and Solitude, and Leisure for the improvement of her

Mind. But this Affliction did not last ; for upon my Lord Ambassador's preparing to go to Nimeguen, and a real pretence of an Affair that concerned her, namely, the disposing of a considerable sum of money entrusted with me, she decently took the opportunity of Mr. Bernard Grenville returning out of Italy, whither he had been sent with a Public Character to the Great Duke of Tuscany, and passing through Paris, of being conducted by that honourable and worthy Gentleman, without those difficulties she might otherwise have met with : nor doubt I but my Lady Berkeley, who was privy to her being married, and had now another Lady with her, less scrupulous and more diverting, was the easier wrought on to part with one she could suffer to be supplanted by another, after such professions of the most superlative Friendship and Endearments in the World, and which, I am certain, contributed not a little to what afflicted this tender and good natured Creature.

Mrs. Godolphin (for so now I call her) having thus taken leave of Paris, arrived at Dover the third of April, in which interim I had by her direction ordered her Accommodations to be removed from Berkeley House to Doctor Warnett's in Covent Garden, whose wife was her near relation. So on the Sixth of April she

gave me notice of her being come to London, where the next day I waited on her, to the no small Joy, you may be sure, of all her Friends, as well as of myself. I will not repeat to your Ladyship what had already passed between us in friendly expostulations, for the unkindness of her so long concealing from me the circumstance of her Marriage, because she had expressed her Sorrow with such an asseveration as in my whole life before I never heard her utter, so as I could not but forgive her heartily. Nor did this suffice, for she often acknowledged her fault, and begged of me that I would not diminish aught of my good Opinion of her, to the least wounding the entire Friendship which was between us ; protesting she had been so afflicted in herself for it, that were it to do again, no consideration or compliance in the World should have prevailed on her to break her Promise, as some had done to her regret. In good earnest, I was sorry to see her troubled for it, considering the Empire of a passionate Love, the singular and silent way of the Lover, whose gravity and temper you know so well, and with whom I had nothing of that intimacy and endeared Friendship which might entitle me to the Confidence he has since not thought me unworthy of. I therefore mention this passage, because she was

a Person of so exact and nice a Conscience, that for all the World she would not have violated her Promise ; nor did I ever find it in the least save this, which, when all is done, was of no great importance. Save that I took it a little to heart she should so industriously conceal a thing from one to whom she had all along communicated her most intimate thoughts ; and when that affection of hers was placed, which she would often acknowledge was not possible for her to moderate as she desired, or bring to the least indifference, after all her innocent stratagems and endeavours, and even sometimes resolutions, to quit all the World, and think of him only in her Prayers.

This scene being thus over, to my great satisfaction, and, as upon all occasions I advised, when those melancholy thoughts and fancies used to interrupt her quiet, we will look upon this Lady now, as a settled Woman, and in the Arms of that excellent Person the most worthy to possess her. It was on the 13th of April that she did me the honour of a visit at my house, expressing infinite acknowledgments to Almighty God for His goodness to her, after a most solemn manner, and that once again she was come among her friends, begging of me, that I would continue to assist her with those little services she was pleased to accept,

And now having thought fit to make their marriage no longer a secret,—for she had not yet, I think, revealed it to her sister, nor did his Majesty or Court, know anything of it, till she was in Equipage to appear as became her—she obtained of the Queen a considerable augmentation of a Lease she had of certain Lands in Spalding, about which she was pleased to make use of my assistance, for the settlement of it. This was in May, and by the next month she had furnished and formed her pretty family at Berkeley House, whither on the 27th of June, she removed out of Covent Garden, and began to receive the visits and usual Congratulations upon Marriages, so universally approved of.

During this, I had the good fortune to secure a considerable sum due to her, which lay in some danger. In September I began to build and accommodate that pretty habitation for her in Scotland Yard, which she contrived and adorned with so much ingenuity and decency; and where your Ladyship, and all who knew and loved that excellent creature, have been so cheerful, so happy, and so unhappy, that I never can pass or think upon the place but a thousand sad thoughts affect me.

It was during the fitting of that Lodging, that she

came down to us at Saye's Court again, and blessed the little apartment you know, with her presence, from the 28th of September, to the 19th of October, her husband then being at Newmarket with his Majesty ; nor can your Ladyship forget how sweetly she lived in their retirement all this winter, till hearing of my Lord Berkeley's return from his Embassy, she thought fit to remove to her own Lodgings, now finished at Whitehall for altogether ; which accordingly she did on the last of March, settling with that pretty and discreet economy so natural to her ; and never was there such an household of faith, never Lady more worthy of the blessings she was entering into, who was so thankful to God for them.

"Lord," says she, in a Letter to me, "when I this day considered my happiness, in having so perfect health of body, cheerfulness of mind, no disturbance from without, nor grief within, my time my own, my house quiet, sweet, and pretty, all manner of Conveniencies for serving God, in public and private, how happy in my Friends, Husband, Relations, Servants, Credit, and none to wait or attend on, but my dear and beloved God, from whom I receive all this, what a melting joy runs through me at the thoughts of all these mercies ! and how did I think

myself obliged to go to the foot of my Redeemer, and acknowledge my own unworthiness of his favour : but then what words was I to make use of ? Truly at first of none at all, but a devout silence did speak for me ; but after that I poured out my prayers, and was in an amazement that there should be such a sin as ingratitude in the world, and that any should neglect this great duty. But why do I say all this to you, my friend ? Truly that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and I am still so full of it, that I cannot forbear expressing my thoughts to you."

And that this was not a transient rapture, upon the sense of her present enjoyment, but a permanent and devout affection ; upon the 16th day of October following, which day she constantly used to give me an account of her concerns the year past, I find this passage in a Letter :—

"God Almighty has been infinitely gracious to me this year, for He has brought me back into my own native Country in safety, and honourably prospered me in my temporal affairs, above my expectation continued my health, and my friends ; delivered me from the torments of suspense ; given me a husband that above all men living I value ; in a word, I have

little to wish but a Child, and to contribute something to my friend's happiness, which I most impatiently desire ; and then I must think before I can remember, what I would have more than I enjoy in this world, but the continuance of a thankful heart to my God."

This, Madam, was the use and the grateful return she made of the short blessings she enjoyed. Nor need I acquaint your Ladyship, with what care she instructed her servants, how sedulously she kept her family to religious duties, how decently she received her friends, how profitably she employed every moment of time. Nothing in this world had she more to wish, but what God soon after gave her, that she might be Mother of a Child ; which she so passionately desired after two years that she yet had none, as in the interval she took home to her a poor orphan girl, whom she tended, instructed, and cherished, with the tenderness of a natural mother. For I have beheld when she dressed and undressed it, and laid it to sleep with all the circumstances of a careful Mother and nurse ; till it pleased God to give her certain hopes of the blessing she thought only wanting to consummate her happiness. Nor did, as your Ladyship well knows, any Inconveniency of that

burthen, at all slacken her devout course, but improve it rather ; when to other considerable Charities, a little before she was brought to bed, she sent me £70 to distribute ; by which were relieved many indigent people and poor housekeepers ; and this was her own entirely, for her excellent husband had the year before settled on her, not only the product, but absolute disposal of the portion which she brought, to above £4,000 ; for the irreversible continuance thereof, they were pleased to entrust me to manage the Stock ; so as now having still wherewithal to enlarge her Charity, without prejudice, there was indeed nothing wanting which she desired more in the world, as often she would repeat it to me, but the life of that “ Dear Man,” for so she called her husband, for whom she had now and then much apprehension, subject as he was to fevers that had formerly endangered him, not in the least foreboding of her own departure, and leaving him behind her ; though upon a dream of mine I once related to her some years before, she affirmed with much earnestness that she should certainly die before me : which though I took little notice of then, and believed nothing less, I cannot but since reflect upon ; especially when I call to mind the order she gave the painter, that in

the picture she some years since bestowed upon me, she would be drawn in a lugubrious posture, sitting upon a Tomb-stone adorned with a Sepulchre Urn ; nor was this at all my fancy, but her express desire. But to lay no more stress on this, how frequently have I heard her say, she loved to be in the house of Mourning. Nor does your Ladyship forget how a few days before her Reckoning was out, my Lady Viscountess Mordant giving her a visit, and finding her Eyes swollen with tears, she told her she had been doing a sad, yet to her a pleasing thing, and that was the writing something to her husband which she requested he would do for her, if she should die of that Child ; and then added the great Comfort and satisfaction it was to her, that she had put her little concerns in order, and otherwise made preparations against all surprises, and was perfectly resigned. This discourse for the present drew mutual Tears, but abated nothing of her wonted cheerfulness : when on the fifteenth of May, which was the Anniversary of her marriage, she with your Ladyship and sister Gr. honoured my poor house with a visit—the last she ever gave me, and therefore not to be forgotten—the perfect good humour she then was in renders the memory of it sad, as well as that she was in the July

after, when we all went with her to Mr. Ashmole's at Lambeth, who diverted her with many curiosities : but after this, growing bigger, she rarely stirred abroad, save to the Chapel. It was yet again on the fourth of August, that my Lady Mordant and my wife, by assignation between them, went to dine with her at her pretty apartment ; they found her well, but something more than usually solemn ; she had, it seems, been reading and sorting of papers and Letters, and how, says she, is it possible to think of one's friends we are to leave behind, without concernment ; with discourse to this purpose. This more than ordinary impulse, that she should not outlive the happiness she had so long wished for, made the Conversation less gay and cheerful than otherwise it was wont to be. And it seems to me, she had some apprehensions extraordinary, which were not discerned by any of her friends, when often wishing that she might, if so it pleased God, bring her husband one Child, and leave him that pledge of her entire affection. She seemed to thirst after nothing more than to be with God ; and verily what estimate she took of these poor satisfactions here, when I have sometimes reflected on the circumstances of her youth and cheerful temper, with the prospect of as much

worldly happiness as she could desire, I have extremely wondered at her contempt of it, finding likewise that it did not proceed from any peevish discontent or singularity of humour, but from a philosophical, wise and pious consideration of the vicissitude and instability of all earthly fruitions, and an ardent longing after that glorious state, "where," said she, "I shall be perfectly at repose, and sin no more." And that these were almost her continual thoughts and aspirations, see how she entertains me, in a post-script about the very time :—

"Let us pray, that God's Kingdom of Grace being received into our hearts, his Kingdom of Glory may succeed, and so we ever be with the Lord ; which indeed I long for, more than all the satisfactions of this world ; really, Friend, there's nothing in it to be chosen for itself. Is not eating to satisfy the pain of hunger, sleep to ease our weariness, and other diversions, to take off the mind from being too intent on things that it cannot always support without great inconveniency to its faculties ? Retirement again is to discharge it of that burthen, and the stains it has contracted by being in conversation, and impertinent Company ; so that upon the matter, our entire life is, in my opinion, an enquiry after remedies, which

do often, if not always, exchange rather than cure our infirmities ; I acknowledge that God has imparted to me many great blessings, which if our nature were not sadly depraved, we might exceedingly rejoice in, but we make so ill use of most of them, that we turn those things to mischiefs, which are given to us for our good," &c. In this style she goes on, and could a Seneca, or an Antoninus, or indeed the wisest and holiest person have uttered [aught] more divine and piously serious ? Nor did she say this only, but she practised it : for with what devout and solemn preparations passed the rest of this fatal month ! Having received the blessed sacrament but two days before she was brought to bed, so preventing all possible surprises, and waiting now with her wonted alacrity and resignation the approach of the conflict she was to enter upon, she on the second of September, began first to be sensible of some alteration in her temper, and during that night it was concluded it might be her labour, and so it was. With what exceeding patience, devotion, and courage she sustained it, your Ladyship, who was all the time assisting, with both those excellent sisters, can best tell !

It was then on Tuesday, the third of that unfortunate Month, when coming about 11 o'clock in the

forenoon as my custom was, to visit her and ask of her health, that I found she was in Travail ; and you may easily imagine how extremely I was concerned, not to stir from the house till I had some assurance that all succeeded well. And indeed to all appearance so it did. For it pleased God that within an hour, your Ladyship brought me the joyful tidings of a Man-Child born into the world, and a very little after admitted me to see and bless that lovely Babe by the Mother's side ; when the very first word she spake to me was, " I hope you have given thanks to God for His infinite mercy to me !" O with what satisfaction, with what joy and over-rapture did I hear her pronounce it ! with what satisfaction and pleasure, did I see the Mother safe, and her desire accomplished, without any accident that could give the least umbrage or suspicion of approaching danger ! so as me-thought of nothing more than rejoicing and praising God, arguing a thousand benedictions !

In this fair and hopeful condition she continued all that day, when her husband, now at Windsor with the Court, being sent for to come to double and complete the Joy, upon the Thursday following, his little Son was made a Christian, [his name Francis] in presence of both the parents ; his Uncle Sir William

Godolphin, Mr. Harvey, Treasurer to her Majesty, and Lady Berkeley being susceptors ; the Chaplains, who constantly used to say prayers in the family, performing the office.

Seeing this dear Lady so well laid, the Child baptized, and everything in a hopeful way, my wife, who was now to visit her, and I, returned home, as full of joy and satisfaction as we could be for the best and most estimable friend we had in the world ; but ah, how were we both surprised, when on the Sunday following there was a Letter delivered me in the Church, about the latter end of the Morning Sermon, in this doleful style :—

“ My poor wife is fallen very ill of a fever, with lightness in her head. You know who says ‘ the prayer of the faithful shall save the sick ’ ; I humbly beg your charitable prayers, for this poor creature and your distracted servant. London : Saturday, 9 o’clock.”

O how I was struck through, as with a dart ! I am not able to tell your Ladyship with how sad and apprehensive thoughts my wife and I hastened immediately to Whitehall ; where we found her in all the circumstances of danger ; and though distinctly knowing those who came to visit and were about her, yet had the distemper already so far prevailed on her

spirits, that it was a sad and mournful thing to find how her fancy and usual temper was disordered. To all this, the season happened to prove excessively hot, which exceedingly contributed to her suffering. There had been, when I came, but one physician sent for ; but my wife, suspecting, with others, that this violent surprise could not likely proceed from either the intemperance of the weather or impair of one so well laid as to all appearance as she was, but possibly from accident, it was thought advisable to call an experienced person in cases of this nature. But it was so very long ere the doctor could be found, and so late ere he came, that through the frequency and violence of her fits, which were now delirious, her spirits were so far wasted, that though he were of the same opinion, and that something was omitted, yet would he by no entreaty be persuaded to apply anything but in conjunction with other physicians. Doctor Lowther being called away some hours before, and besides it being now far in the night, it was with extraordinary difficulty that I got my ancient dear and religious friend, Doctor Needham, since with God, and then but valetudinary himself, to come. Others who were sent for, wearied as they pretended with toil, would not be prevailed with to rise, except Doctor Short ;

so as till now, there had been little attempted ; nor anything even by these with any assurance, so far she was spent ; and her condition not admitting of proper remedies for what they feared, gave slender hopes of success. The deliriums increased, and albeit with some promise and intermissions, to appearance yet were they only such as proceeded from languor and tiredness ; so that though she still retained her memory of the persons about her, what she said was altogether inconsistent, and growing more impetuous and deplorable, gave presage of utmost danger. This only was highly remarkable, that in all this disorder of fancy and almost distraction, she uttered not one syllable or expression that might in the least offend God, or any creature about her ; a thing which during these alienations of mind does seldom happen ; but which showed how blessed a thing it was to live holily and carefully, as this Innocent did ; persons that are delirious usually uttering extravagancies that discover their worst inclinations. But she was now in a manner spent, and nought could physicians do, when neither the cupping nor the pidgeons—those last of remedies—wrought any effect. Other things had been perhaps convenient ; but there was no strength to bear inward remedies, when even the most gentle

had been fatal ; and there now appearing a kind of Erysipelas on her back, neck, and arms, the malignancy grew desperate,—and this excellent Creature passes a fiery Trial, exercised in all the circumstances of pain and weariness. We beheld her now languishing under the last conflicts till the morning of the next day. There had been, your Ladyship knows, a consultation the night before and a resolution of attempting searching at a venture, if she lived till day, and the rather that the physicians might not seem to do nothing in a desperate case, than expecting any good effect without a miracle. But when the morning came, finding her still more debilitated, and the paroxysms impetuous and almost incessant, all hopes being given over, upon the importunity and recommendation of that excellent and pious lady, the Viscountess Mordant, they permitted one Doctor Faber to make trial of a Cordial, celebrated by her Ladyship for the great matter it had performed; and indeed it seemed at first to compose her, and somewhat allay the violence of her fits. But the moments were short, and her conflict is repeated, with the usual violence ; till she who was wont to raise herself up as oft as they came, now sinks down as no more able to sustain them; her spirits faint : till no more pulse perceivable,—for

your Ladyship and I held her all this while by the hands,—with the most ardent prayers and offices of the holy Man, who continually attended, he earnestly, and we all devoutly recommend, and she quietly renders up, her happy soul to her blessed Redeemer, in whose bosom she is now delivered from all earthly miseries, and assumed into those blissful Mansions prepared for his Saints, and such as, like her, excellent in virtue.

Thus ended this incomparable Lady : our never to be sufficiently lamented loss : leaving not only a disconsolate Husband, whose inexpressible grief and deep affliction would hardly suffer him to be spectator of her languishments, drowned in tears and prostrate at the Mercy Seat, but all her Relations, and who had the honour to know her, in as much real and pungent sorrow as Christians and tender hearts were capable to express, and as was highly due for so sensible and universal a loss, and so infinitely deplored.

This fatal hour was (your Ladyship knows) about one o'clock, at noon on the Monday, September the ninth, 1678, in the 25th year and prime of her age. O unparalleled loss ! O grief indincible ! By me never to be forgotten—never to be overcome ! Nor pass I the sad anniversary and lugubrious period

without the most sensible emotions, sorrow that draws tears from my very heart whilst I am reciting it.

But thus she passed to a better World, when only worthy of her, when as if presaging what was at hand, she that very day seven-night (as I noted) furnished herself with the heavenly Viaticum, after an extraordinary preparation, preventing the possible disadvantages of what might surprise her spirits and disorder her recollection, with a most pious and heavenly address. Nor was this taken notice of only by those who were witnesses of it some days before she was brought to bed, but signally appeared in that paper which she had left in the hands of her endeared Sister-in-law Mistress Boscawen, to deliver her Husband, in case of mortal accident ; which so soon as it was possible to compose his and the universal grief to any temper, was performed.

“My dear, not knowing how God Almighty may deal with me, I think it my best course to settle my affairs, so as that, in case I be to leave this world, no earthly thing may take up my thoughts. In the first place, my dear, believe me, that of all earthly things you were and are the most dear to me ; and I am convinced that nobody ever had a better or half so good a husband. I beg your pardon for all my Im-

perfections, which I am sensible were many ; but such as I could help, I did endeavour to subdue, that they might not trouble you : for those defects which I could not rectify in myself, as want of judgment in the management of my family and household affairs, which I own myself to be very defective in, I hope your good nature will excuse, and not remember to my disadvantage when I am gone. I ask your pardon for the vanity of my humour, and for being often [more] melancholy and splenetic than I had cause to be. I was always ashamed of myself when I was so, and sorry for it, and I hope it will come into the number of those faults which I could not help. Now my dear God be with thee ; pray God bless you, and keep you his faithful Servant for ever. In Him be all thy joy and delight, satisfaction and comfort, and do not grieve too much for me, since I hope I shall be happy, being very much resigned to God's will, and leaving this World with, I hope, in Christ Jesus, a good Conscience. Now, my dear, if you please, permit me to ask leave to bestow a legacy or two amongst my friends and servants. In the first place, if it might be, I could wish, when the Child I go with grows of a fit bigness, it might be either with my sister Boscawen, or my sister Penn, for I know

they will be careful of its better Part, which is the chief thing I am concerned about. In the next place, I desire you would give B——” [her woman] “one hundred pounds (the use of which being six pounds a year, she may live at her Father’s house upon, if she will, for I fear she will scarce get anybody to bear with her want of good service, as I have done). For my Maid, if she do not marry, I hope she will be kept to look after my Child, when it comes from Nurse. In the meantime, you will give her board wages. For my two footmen, I hope you will get them places as soon as you can, etc. However, if you be not disposed to keep them, you will give them at parting ten pounds a piece. I desire you will give my Sisters my share of the Queen’s Lease, fifty pounds a year; it is between them two, my unmarried ones I mean; and to my Cousin Sarah an hundred pounds in money. To my Lady Silvius my great diamond ring,” &c.

“Now, my dear, I have done, if you please to lay out about an hundred pounds more in rings for your five Sisters, to remember me by. I know nothing more I have to desire of you, but that you will sometimes think of me with kindness, but never with too much grief. For my Funeral, I desire there may be

no cost bestowed upon it at all ; but if I might, I would beg that my body might lie where I have had such a mind to go myself, at Godolphin, among your friends. I believe, if I were carried by Sea, the expense would not be very great ; but I don't insist upon that place, if you think it not reasonable ; lay me where you please.

“Pray, my dear, be kind to that poor Child I leave behind, for my sake, who loved you so well ; but I need not bid you, I know you will be so. If you should think fit to marry again, I humbly beg that little fortune I brought, may be first settled upon my Child, and that as long as any of your Sisters live, you will let it (if they permit) live with them, for it may be, though you will love it, my successor will not be so fond of it, as they I am sure will be.

“Now, my dear Child, farewell ; the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your heart and mind in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with thee, and remain with thee, ever and ever. Amen.”

Then follows what she had entrusted me withal.

This endearing Instance of a truly loyal and admir-

able Wife were capable of the most noble reflections, so religious, so tender, so discreet; and every way becoming. That she accuses herself of being sometimes more solemn than usually young Ladies are, and which she calls the Spleen, I can by no means admit a fault : and if her other imperfections, of which she begs pardon, were but such as her want of economic prudence in the management of her family, I dare pronounce her the most consummate of all the perfections that can adorn or recommend her sex.

I say nothing of that wonderful affection to her Husband, that made her so desirous to mingle her dirt with his in a dormitory 300 miles from the rest of all her Relations, and where to my knowledge she would more contentedly have passed all her days with him than amidst the splendour of the greatest Court, and where he might be the Horizon, all that she could or cared to see.

The education of her dear Child is next : Observe with what care for the better Part, with what excellent choice for the person to whom she recommended it. Nor does she extend her kindness only to her Relations, but the meanest of her Servants. As for the Poor, she had not only sent those good works before her, which she now enjoys the treasure and

reward of in Heaven, but took order they might be continued after her, and she being dead yet speaks.

I might haply have taken it unkindly, if she had named so much as a brother, and left me out ; but the Legacies she bequeathed, or rather desired her Husband to gratify her in, were only to her Sisters and your Ladyship, except what she bestows among her Domestic ; to one of which she gave no less than an hundred pounds, and to her own Sisters the value of a thousand ; lastly, to me the honour (at the foot of this Paper) of being mentioned the depository of her Trust as I was the distributor of her Bounty. But which was more obliging, the solemn profession to her Husband, a little before her Sickness, that she knew of nothing more she had to finish or wish for in this World, but that she might do me some signal kindness. I confess she had often both said and written so to me, but that she should think of it as a concern doubly endears her memory. This (says that excellent Creature) she has left me to do ; and Madam, he has done it, in allowing me the honour of his friendship, and accepting my little services ; for the rest, I have her Picture in the house, and the Idea of her virtues in my heart, besides a thousand expressions of a religious and noble Friendship, under

her own fair hand, which I preserve and value above all she could else bequeath me.

There was another small Packet sealed up, which she desired by the superscription might be burnt, and not opened, as accordingly it was performed, and as I conceive, contained the Cipher only by which she usually corresponded with her Ghostly Father, the Dean of Hereford ; or some particulars, which she would not trust her memory with, in case she had lived, for as I acquainted your Ladyship, she kept a Catalogue of mercies, deliverances, successes, resolutions, and other assistances, for the discussion of her Conscience with the most accurate niceness. But I enter not into this Secret.

Thus began, lived, and ended this incomparable Christian Virgin, Wife, and Friend, for an emulous example of perfection in all those capacities. But after all I have said, impossible will it be to conceive what she was, without endeavouring to imitate and attain those excellencies and early virtues which made her what she was : to show you that, something I have here attempted according to my poor ability ; but he were a rare Artist indeed could reach the original, and give those last and living touches which should make it breathe. But, Madam,

that is not to be expressed by lights and shadows which is altogether illustrious, and has nothing in it dark.

Here, then, Madam, after I have recounted to you her Life,—but which reaches the profile only, and wants a world of finishing,—I should, according to the usual method, conclude it with her Character, if that accomplished piece were not reserved for a greater Master, and one that could describe her mind. All I can pretend to will hardly reach the out-strokes, and when I shall have done my best, be but an imperfect copy.

“Add this paper, Electra, to the fardel of my other Impertinencies; but take heed to the steps and progress you make; for if I live, I will write your life, at least from the first approaches of our friendship, till I carry it into other Mansions. But because your great humility shall not suffer by the admirable things I must say of you, nor the brightness of the Subject be eclipsed by the defects of the Instrument, it shall be under supposed names, but in veritable instances; for either we want such examples for good writers to exercise their style and talents on, or good writers to transmit them to posterity.

“I know not really how she could do the age we live in more Justice, nor leave that to come a nobler monument of Gratitude for the Improvements your Conversation has taught it : whilst Electra knows this, she will need no Socrates or Zeno to stand before her ; she reveres herself, and can do nothing below her dignity. I protest to you, the thought that she is always present, and the contemplation of her virtues, is more to me than a thousand dead philosophers. But we have a better monitor, and it were an imbecility infinitely beneath us, to need the veneration of men, when God,—all Ear and Eye, omniscient and omnipresent,—observes both our words and actions. Let us therefore both so speak with God as if men heard us, and so converse with men as if God saw us.”

Behold, Madam, what I once subscribed at the foot of a Letter to this blessed Creature ; and often she would smile at what I used to repeat upon this subject, and as often did I disbelieve myself. Far, very far was it from my imagination, farther, infinitely farther from my desires, to survive (for) this office ; who had it constantly in my wishes that she might close my eyes ; but so it has pleased God, that I should verify my prophecy, and on your Ladyship’s

command, absolve my promise together. I have written her Life, and should now present your Ladyship with her Picture : here are Colours, but where is (as I said) the Master ? She sat indeed some considerable time to me, and her conversation had been enough to inspire an Artist ; but I assure you, there are some peculiar Graces, which the most skilful do not arrive to in their most elaborate and finished pieces. And she was full of those, and such as I never yet did see in any of her sex but in her alone ; and am certain never shall, unless it be in those few pieces she drew herself, whereof your Ladyship is a breathing and illustrious one, whilst you tread the paths of her piety and virtues ; this, Madam, I pretend to know, and to show you from whom I take my measures.

THE PICTURE.

Let me first then recall to your Ladyship's remembrance how she usually passed the day, for an instance almost inimitable in the station where she was, the Court. I will begin with Sunday, the first of the week.

Were it never so dark, wet, or uncomfortable weather, during the severity of winter, she would

rarely omit being at the Chapel at 7 o'clock prayers, and if a Communion-day, how late soever her attendance were on the Queen, and her own extraordinary preparation kept her up, she would be dressed and at her private Devotions some hours before the public Office began. This brings to remembrance what I could not then but smile at, that finding one day a long pack-thread passing through the keyhole of her chamber door, and reaching to her bed's head (opposite to that of your sister's, if I be not mistaken), and inquiring what it signified, I at last understood, it had been to awaken her early in the morning, the Sentinel, whose station was of course near the entrance, being desired to pull it very hard at such an hour, whilst the other extreme was tied fast about her wrist, fearing her maid might oversleep herself, or call her later than she had appointed.

But besides the monthly Communions, she rarely missed a Sunday throughout the whole Year, wherein she did not receive the holy Sacrament, if she were in town and tolerable health ; and I well know she had those who gave her constant advertisement where it was celebrated upon some more solemn festivals, besides not seldom on the weekdays assisting at one poor creature's or other ; and when sometimes, being

in the Country, or on a Journey, she had not these opportunities, she made use of a devout meditation upon that sacred Mystery, by way of mental Communion, so as she was in a continual state of preparation : and O, with what unspeakable care and niceness did she use to dress and trim her soul against this Heavenly Banquet ; with what flagrant devotion at the Altar. I do assure your Ladyship, I have seen her receive the Holy Symbols with such an humble and melting joy in her countenance, as seemed to be something of transport, not to say angelic—something I cannot describe : and she has herself confessed to me to have felt in her soul such influxes of heavenly Joy as have almost carried her into another world : I do not call them “Raptures” and “Ecstasies,” because she would not have endured to be esteemed above other humble Christians ; but that she was sometimes visited with extraordinary favours I have many reasons to believe : see what upon another occasion she writes to me :—

“O, my friend, how happy was I on Sunday last. By reason of this foolish play” (of which I have already given your Ladyship an account), “most imperfect were my preparations, and yet I do not remember that God was ever more gracious to me but

once afore ; and indeed that time I had so great a sense of my own unworthiness and the wonderful condescension and love of God, that I had like to have fallen flat on my face ; but (that excepted) this was the most refreshing. O Jesus, said I, how happy are we, how blessed, that have the Lord for our God. And you, blessed Angels, who are present at these assemblies, admiring the heavenly bounty, I tell you I was even dissolved with love to God. And yet, after all this, (what wretched things we are) : I was drowsy at Church, wandering in my thoughts, and forgetful of these favours that very day ; and great cause I had to lament my sins of even that day. Thus I acknowledge to you God's love to my poor soul, and my foul ingratitude to Him ; that you may pray for the continuance of the one, and I trust the other will in time grow less." See this humble soul ! But I subjoin one more :—

"I bless God," says she, "I grow daily less fond of the world, more thankful to God, less solicitous for outward things, and more thirsty after the blessed Sacrament, not as I was wont, nor because I hold it my duty, but out of an ardent desire to commemorate my Saviour's death, and to be again entertained with the wonderful pleasure that I feel there, and nowhere

else. All worldly joys, all splendid ornaments, titles, and honour, would I bring to the feet of my crucified Saviour."

Nor did this blessed Saint hear the word of God with less reverence : employing that day almost entirely in pious meditations, and never failing to recollect what she had heard, with that diligence, that there was not a Sermon but what she had abstracted, writing down the principal heads of the whole discourse, so soon as she came from Church (if she had leisure), or, to be sure, in the evening ere she slept ; and this course she never omitted, nor to repeat what she observed of most instructive : and her memory was so happy, as nothing material escaped her. This, to my astonishment, I can testify.

How would this Lady rejoice at the approach of the Lord's day ! She has often told me, she felt another soul in her, and that there was nothing more afflicted her, than those impertinent visits on Sunday Evenings, which she avoided with all imaginable industry : whilst yet seldom did she pass one without going to visit, pray by, or instruct some poor religious Creature or other, though it were to the remotest part of the Town, and sometimes, if the season were inviting, walk into the fields or Gardens to contem-

plate the works of God. In a word, she was always so solemnly cheerful upon that day; and so devout, that without looking into the Calendar, one might have read it in her countenance. Thus was the Sunday taken up in prayers, hearing, receiving, meditating on the word and works of God, acts of Charity, and other holy exercises, without the least formality or confusion, because she had cast all her affairs into such a method, as rendered it delightful as well as holy.

Upon festival days, she never omitted the Offices of the Church ; taking those opportunities of visiting poor sick people, relieving and comforting them ; and then would lengthen her evening retirements with proper meditations on the Mystery, or Commemoration ; for which she had of her own collection, apposite entertainments : but then upon indicted fast days, besides what she weekly set apart herself, and especially before the Monthly Communions, how extraordinary were her recesses and devotions on every Friday, when she rarely stirred out of her little Oratory but to public prayers, and then would end the evenings in visits of charity ; and did for several years observe the Lent with strictness, both as to her reflections and devotion, till finding it much impair

her health and delicate constitution, something of those severe mortifications she was persuaded to abate ; only the holy week her exercises were extended to all the parts of duty, and more solemn preparation, spent in an uninterrupted course of penitential and extraordinary devotion, yet without superstitious usages, or the least moroseness.

Upon such Anniversaries she would be early at the Chapel ; and sometimes I have known her shut up in the Church after the public Offices have been ended, without returning to her Chamber at all, to prevent impertinent visits and avocations, and that she might spend the day in continual devotion. With these austerities passed she the days of abstinence ; nay, though it fell upon a festival, and when others thought themselves at liberty. This recalls to me an answer which she once returned me, kindly reproving her for a severity on a certain holy day.

“As to fasting on a festival,” says she, “I had not done it, but that I had for it the opinion of a learned and reverend Bishop, who told me it was not a fasting day of our own making ; we might, when a fast and a feast of the Church meet, feast at Church and fast at home ; which I did, and it was a good day with me. I could be content never to dine so long

as I live, so as I might spend every day like that.”

By this your Ladyship may see how well advised she was in all she did, and what extraordinary gust and satisfaction she received in her devout intercourses.

But the truth is, not only did she fast on days of Indiction, and such as the Church enjoins : every meal was a day of abstinence with her, for as she seldom ate of above one or two dishes, where there were great plenty, so very rarely would she have any sauces, and commonly chose the dryest and leanest morsels ; and frequently have I known her deny her appetite things which I am certain she loved, so as I have made it now and then a little quarrel, for treating herself no better, considering her tender fabric, early rising, tedious and late watchings, laborious devotions, and not seldom even to fainting in her retirements. But she would tell me smilingly, that she was as strong as a lion ; and though I manifestly perceived the contrary, both by her countenance and other circumstances, that these austerities did her injury, she would disguise it with an industry so natural, and put such life and cheerfulness into her looks and mien, as has made me call to mind what we read of Daniel and his companions, (Dan. i,) who after their ascetic food, looked fairer and in better

point than all the rest who ate of the Royal portion. "I can be fat," she would tell me, "in three days when I will."

I forgot to remember your Ladyship, of her employing most part of Lent in working for poor people, cutting out and making waistcoats and other necessary coverings, which she constantly distributed amongst them, like another Dorcas, spending much of her time, and no little of her money, in relieving, visiting, and inquiring of them out. And whilst she was thus busy with her needle, she would commonly have one or other read by her, through which means, and a happy memory, she had almost the whole Scriptures by heart, and was so versed in Doctor Hammond's Annotations and other practical books, Controversies, and Cases, as might have stocked some who pass for no small Divines; not to mention sundry divine penitential and other Hymns, breathing of a Spirit of holiness, and such as showed the tenderness of her heart, and wonderful love to God.

Thus spent she the Sunday, feasts, or fasts; nor were the extraordinary weekdays other than Sundays with her, when none came to interrupt her course, which in some particulars was constant and unintermitted. For the Sun had not yet drawn the

Curtains of his purple bed, whose rising she oft prevented, and even sometimes the Morning watch, when this holy Virgin, waking, after a short Ejaculation to the Father of Lights for the refreshment she had received, thus excites herself,—

“Up and be doing, sleep no more ;
Hark ! who is knocking at the door ?
Arise, my fair one, come away ;
For thee I wait : arise, and pray.
Shake off thy sleep, behold, 'tis I !
Canst thou love that, when I am by ?
Vain thoughts, presume not to come near,
You'll find no entertainments here ;
My Love has sworn—her vows are past—
That I shall be her first and last.
Rise then, my dearest, come and see
What pleasures are reserved for thee !
I come, dear Lord. Behold I rise.
Thee I beyond all pleasures prize.”

Do not imagine I am pursuing a romance, or in a rapture myself, whilst I call her up with this angelic Hymn, since I can assure your Ladyship it is but what I find under her own hand, and amongst those devout transports and composures of hers, which I am certain were her own : and when she was in health, she would be called whilst it was yet dark, to seek her Lord, like those holy women that went early to the Sepulchre,

No sooner was she descended from her bed, but she fell on her knees in profound adoration ; and all the time of her dressing,—which for the most part she finished of herself without other help,—her maid was reading some part of Scripture to her, and when her assistance was necessary, she would take the book herself, and read to her maid ; thus continually employed she her meditations, till she was fully dressed ; which she would be in a very little time, even to all the agreeable circumstances becoming her, because indeed she became everything, and this early rising and little indulgence to her ease, made her look like a flower, lovely, and fresh, and full of health : being in this posture, she withdrew to private devotion in her closet, till her servant advertised her it was time to go to the Chapel, where she was ever with the first of the devout sex, were it never so wet, cold, and dark, even before daybreak, in midst of winter.

Returned from Chapel, she would shut herself up in her little Oratory again, where, till the Queen required her attendance,—for I now describe her as she was at Court,—she was either employed in reading some holy book, or getting some Chapter or Psalms by heart, such as she had collected abundance of the

most edifying ; neither omitted she to pray constantly with her small family, which she took great care to instruct upon all occasions. Nor did her forenoon devotion determine here : she not seldom might be found in the Chapel at ten o'Clock in the longer Office. Nay, and I have sometimes met her above in his Majesty's little Oratory before dinner, if conveniently she could slip away from the mixed Company of the withdrawing-room, whilst the Queen sat out ; and this she did, not out of singularity or superstitious devotion, or that she thought herself obliged to it, but (as she has told me) to avoid occasions of idle and impertinent discourse, which was almost unavoidable in the Ante-Chambers.

So soon as her Majesty had dined, if it were her duty and turn to wait, and that she had also taken her repast, if she owed no formal visits, or were not interrupted by others, she usually spent the afternoon in working with her needle, which was commonly (but especially, as I noted, in Lent time,) making Coats and Garments for poor people, and sometimes for great and rich, for there was nothing but her delicate fingers could do, and she had an Invention and fancy so elegant and pretty, that when there was anything extraordinary to be done in

suiting Ornaments and adjusting Ladies' matters at Court, though she affected none of this herself, happy was the most illustrious of the Circle, could have her to dress and set them out.

She was sometimes engaged to pass the after dinner at Cards, especially when she came to Berkeley House, (where was great resort,) more to comply with others, than that she took the least delight in it ; and though being commonly extremely fortunate, and very skilful, she commonly rose a winner, and always reserved her winnings for the poor, it was yet amongst the greatest afflictions of her life, when, to comply with some persons of Quality, she sat anything long at it. How many sad complaints has she made to me of this particular : I tell you she looked on it as a Calamity and subjection insupportable. But neither did this nor any other consideration detain her from being present at public prayers at 3 or 4 o'clock, for she would then break off, and happily take that opportunity of making some visit, if she had any to pay.

She had her hours also for reading history and diversions of that nature ; but always such as were choice, profitable, and instructive, and she had devoured an incredible deal of that solid knowledge, and could account of it to admiration ; so as I have

even been astonished to find such an heap of excellent things and material observations collected and written with her own hand, many of which, since her being with God, came to mine, for besides a world of admirable prayers and pieces of flagrant devotion, meditations, and discourses on various subjects which she composed, there was hardly a book she read that she had not common-placed, as it were, or taken some remarkable note of; add this to the Diary of her own life, actions, resolutions, and other circumstances, of which I shall give some specimen; she had contracted the entire history of the Scriptures, and the most illustrious examples, sentences, and precepts, digested under apposite and proper heads; and collected together the result of every Article of the Apostles' Creed, out of Bishop Pearson's excellent Treatise. I have already spoken of her Sermon Notes; but to give a just Account of her Letters, they are so many and in so excellent natural and easy a style, that as for their number, one would believe she did nothing else but write, so for their weight and ingenuity, that she ought to do nothing else; and so easily did her Invention flow, that I have seen her write a very long letter without once taking off her pen but to dip it, and that with

extraordinary judgment ; they were cogent, pathetic, and obliging, and always about doing some kind office, or Religious Correspondence. Nor less was she indefatigable in reading ; seldom stirring abroad without some good book about her, that if by any accident she were to attend or be alone, she might lose no time ; and indeed the tone of her voice (when she read to others) was so suited to all the passions and figures either of reading or discourse, that there was nothing more charming than to hear her recite with such a Spirit and Judgment as the periods fell. It is hardly to be imagined, the talent she peculiarly had in repeating a comical part or acting it, when in a cheerful humour and amongst some particular friends, she would sometimes divert them ; and I have heard her pronounce a Sermon in French which she had heard preached by a friar in Paris upon the profession of a Nun, at which she was present, that really surprised me. Those who have observed the fantastic motion of those Zealots in the pulpit would have seen in this Lady's action, invention, and preachment, the prettiest and most innocent Mimic in the world, and have really believed it had been the Enthusiast himself, but for his frock and face, that had inspired her : certainly she was the

most harmless and diverting Creature in nature. But as her wit was infinite, and in Conversation far superior to any of her sex, so to curb it, had she such perpetual apprehensions of God's omnipresence, that she industriously suppressed it. I could tell your Ladyship of some artificial helps she used, to keep her always in mind of it : thus she would pin up some papers, as it were negligently, in places where she most frequently used to be, with some Character in it, or half word, that signified to her some particular duty or caution ; and though I never came to know this from herself, yet by some observations which I made, I am confident of what I say. But this she did to curb and restrain, as I said, her spriteful wit in perfect humility, and out of fear and tenderness lest she might offend ; though never was Creature more discreetly reserved, or that better understood when (and what) it was fit to speak, and entertain her friends.

To preserve herself then in this humble temper, and assist her more minute Confessions, she kept, as I have hinted, an account of her actions and resolutions, as since her decease I find. In this it was she set down her Infirmities she laboured under, what deliverances she had from danger, what favour

received, what Methods she resolved to take for the employment of her time, and obligations laid upon herself to perform what she so resolved, which doubtless was a Course to keep her close to duty, as well as the frequent Counsels of her Ghostly Father upon all difficulties by the constant Intercourse of Letters, so as she [was] seldom in suspense, what she ought to do upon any difficulty which might concern her : and this infinitely contributed to the Cheerfulness of her Spirits and interior peace ; she was really so afraid that others should think too well of her, that she has sometimes bitterly accused herself, and was wont to send me an anniversary account of her failings and Infirmities, in which God knows they were very few, with a grateful remembrance to God of her Improvements, which I knew to be much greater than she would acknowledge, desiring both advice and prayers for her.

As in the Morning, so in the Evening, it was even some extraordinary and indispensable business which at any time hindered her from the Church Office, which if she missed at three o'clock, she would be sure to find at six, whether she were abroad or at home ; and after that as constantly retired some competent time before Supper for recollection,

Reading and private devotion ; and would sometimes walk abroad to contemplate the works of God, for which she was furnished with proper meditations, which she could extend out of her own stock, as I can witness, to my singular edification and no small admiration : there was really nothing she cast her Eye upon, but instead of impertinent wandering she would derive some holy use from.

“ I wish you here betimes,” one day writing to me, “ that we may walk together. I fancy I could talk of God for ever ; and, indeed, what else can we speak of but our God, of whom we never can say enough :” for Tuesday being usually the day I visited her of course, whether we walked into the Gardens, the fields, or within doors, the most agreeable conversation to her was the contemplation of the works of God ; [or] the contriving how to bring about some charitable office ; and as she was strangely happy in composing differences, so was she of so lucky address, and universally beloved, that what she undertook she seldom failed of accomplishing. Generous as she was, and so obliging to her friends, there hardly passed a day in which she had not done some signal kindness : nor disdained she the meanest Circumstances, so she might do good ; not to omit

how resolute she was in other duties. Nor in all these pious Labours, [was she] the least troublesome, scrupulous, singular, or morose, but [of] the most easy and cheerful conversation in the world.

Thus passed she the Evenings, till Supper ; which she for the most part refused herself, spending that time in her Oratory ; and if she did come down, eating sparingly, retired again so soon as decently she could disengage herself to pray with her little family, and finish the rest of her private course before she went to repose. This your Ladyship knows and could speak to much better than myself, whilst you were fellow virgins and companions in holy duties ; and thus lived she to God and to herself. Let us now take a view how she conversed with others, Domestics and Friends, after she was a Wife, and had a family to govern.

It is usually said of married people, “such a one has altered her condition,” indeed, so had she. But in no sort her Course. It could not be said of this pair, that those who are married cared for the things of this world, how they might please one another, for never was there Lady pleased so well as when she was caring for the things of the Lord ; and this she did, if any ever did, without distraction,

knowing that she could never please her husband better than when she was pleasing God ; so as she was, I may truly say, the same [as] a wife and a virgin. And such a Marriage it was, I am persuaded St. Paul himself would have preferred above the celibate he so highly commended, but for which he had no command, but spoke on supposition.

She was none of those who would have excused her coming to the divine and royal feasts because she had married an husband ; slacking in nothing of her former zeal and labours of love, without the least impeachment to her domestic Charge. So dextrously she knew to reconcile both those duties, that I believe there never was family more an household of faith, never persons linked together in a more honourable, happy, and easy bond : for as she was an excellent Christian, she was a no less unparalleled wife ; I need not therefore describe this virtue to your Ladyship, or call that complaisance which was the height of a most virtuous affection, and reciprocal ; for never were two persons so framed for one another's dispositions, never lived pair in more peace and harmony ; and yet, though this conversation was the most noble and becoming in the world, without troublesome fondness ; yet she could not conceal the

affliction she suffered when he was absent, as when he had been sometimes sent abroad by his Majesty, upon diverse public concerns of State, nor the Joy that so spread itself in her countenance, and agreeable humour, when he was present. In a word, she was conversation as well as Companion for a wise and excellent person, so as if ever two were created for each other, and marriages, as they say, made in heaven, this happy pair were of the number. O irreparable loss, never to be repaired on this side that blessed place!

For the prudent management of her domestic affairs, she was not [slow] to learn whatever might become the gravest or [most] experienced Matron as well as Mistress. She had soon made choice of such servants, and put all things in such order, as nothing was more easy, methodical, and quiet; without singularity or affectation, nothing more decent and honourable. She provided them books to read, prayers to use by themselves, and constantly instructed them herself in the principles of Religion; took care for their due receiving of the holy Sacrament, and was in a word the best mistress in the world: witness her bountiful remembrance of them at her death, of which I have already spoken.

She took exact Account of her daily expenses, which every Saturday she used to sum up, and never went on score, so just and provident she was ; making that a delight which others look on as a Burthen,—namely, the care of her family, which she would go through with an hardiness and masculine virtue, so far was she from being nice and delicate and it infinitely became her. None knew better than she to buy and to choose what was fit ; tempering a discreet frugality with a generous hand and a large heart ; and if in anything profuse, it was in her Charity.

And thus I have showed your Ladyship how she lived to God and to herself ; I have now to add how she conversed with her Neighbours, whom she loved as herself.

Your Ladyship is of too generous a Soul to forget that particular affection she bore you to the last, the esteem she had of your excellent sister and Relations : and methinks I still see the concern she showed, when you were preparing to go into Holland about this time, because her solicitude for your prosperity was accompanied with a tender friendship ; which I find you would keep in memory by the Instances you make to one, whom you justly

think have no less grateful disposition to celebrate her virtues.

Indeed never was any Creature more obliging to her friends and Relations ; to whose Civilities, that she might be just, she not only kept a Catalogue of those she had a more particular esteem of, but would study all imaginable ways to be serviceable to them. We both are witnesses of the pains she would undergo to proselyte vain or indifferent Christians, and with what an admirable address she did it ; without the least diminution of herself, or mean compliance to gain friendship with esteem ; though she was scrupulously careful not to multiply acquaintances, considering the precious moments that are lost in impertinent and formal visits, and therefore reducing [them] to a select and choice number. Nothing in the world did more afflict her than the trifling Conversation of some whom of decency she was obliged to bear with, whilst there was not a visit which she returned to such, but with a secret design, how she might either reclaim those who were less reserved and circumspect, or confirm and encourage those that were more. Never should you hear her speak to the disadvantage of an absent person ; but if others did, she would be either silent and say nothing, unless where she could excuse

them, or endeavour to divert the discourse. In everything else she had a wonderful complacency of nature ; which was infinitely improved by Religion, and a kind of universal Charity, so as to accommodate herself to all innocent humours. She would sing, and play, and act, and recite, and discourse prettily and innocently, a thousand harmless and ingenious purposes to recreate old and melancholy persons, and divert the younger. She had kindness and good nature to sit by the sick and peevish, read and pray by them with insuperable patience and cheerfulness, and comply even with little Children ; she played at any the most difficult games suitable to their Conversation, and that skilfully : nor was there any resisting her agreeable way and governing spirit ; so that, as I noted, the greatest Duchesses and Ladies of the Court sought her friendship and assistance upon any occasion of solemn pomp, Masque, Ball, or extraordinary appearance, because of a certain peculiar fancy and address she had in suiting, dressing, and continuing things of Ornament, with universal approbation ; whilst in all these Compliances, she was watchful of opportunities to instil something of virtue and Religion, as well by her discourse as example, and in such a manner, as not only avoided the Censure of

impertinence and singularity, but which more endeared her to them. What shall I say? She had all the pretty arts and innocent stratagems imaginable of mingling serious things on all occasions, seasoning even her diversions with something of Religion; which, as she would manage it, put to rebuke all their stocks of raillery, so as nothing was more agreeable than her Company wherever she came. Indeed there was nothing proof against the abundance of her wit and piety: she made virtue and holiness a cheerful thing, lovely as herself; and even in the Court, how many of the greatest there, were made to look upon Religion as a serious thing, yet consistent with their post! But this I need not recount to your Ladyship; there are yet some—and more I wish there were—who owe their tincture to this Lady, and will, I hope, retain it; so as, if ever it were an holy Court, it was when this Saint was the life of it. It were easy to show whom, by her counsel and address, she had rescued; some from fatal precipices in that giddy station; others, whom she has instructed, that were ignorant or careless; some, that she gained to a severe course, who were listening to folly and ruin: in a word, it was the pleasure of her life and the business of the

day, to cast about how she might improve it to those advantages. O, were the Courts of Princes adorned and furnished with such a Circle, we should call it Heaven on Earth, and converse with Angels ! But, to justify this and all that I have affirmed concerning the piety of her thoughts, the passion she had to improve others, the richness of her Invention, natural Eloquence, and beauty of her Style, I have no more to do than to mind your Ladyship of a Letter, written by this Saint, when she was now gone from Court, of which I am well assured you are best acquainted, and can yet perhaps produce the original ; for my part I never read it but I look upon it as inspired with an apostolic spirit :—

“Dear Children ; since you are both so lowly in your own Eyes, as to make use of me in a thing which either of you would have done better, but that you distrust yourselves,—namely, the paraphrases upon the prayer lately sent you, I thought myself obliged deeply to consider it again, and having done so, cannot satisfy myself, unless I set down with Pen and Ink what my opinion is of it. As to your dressing, I can’t believe the Doctor meant there should be any neglect of that beauty God has given you, so it be done with this Caution, first, that you

design to captivate none for any satisfaction you take in the number of Lovers or in the Noise of a larger train of Admirers than other young women have, but purely for an honest design of disengaging yourselves as soon as you can from the place you are in, in an honourable way ; and whenever you see any young Man, whom in your hearts you cannot believe will prove that person I speak of, or any married Man, whom you know cannot, with such a one St. Paul says you ought not to converse in the least ; I mean, if [it is] possible to be avoided, and in this age, you know, women are not so wonderfully solicited that have the virtue and modesty of you two. That good service the Ladies of other principles have done you, that men sooner find their Error, and without much difficulty suspected conversations may be avoided.

“ Indeed, it would be a most dreadful sight at the last day, to see any man condemned upon your accounts ; and yet such a thing may be, and yet you honest ; for if you willingly consent men should look upon you and follow you, you are accessory to that sin in St. Matthew, ‘Whoever looks on a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart.’ So that my opinion is, that

mankind, if they make any particular applications, though they don't make love, be, as much as you can, avoided. As to your Conversation, there is nothing forbidden but what is either profane, or unjust, or indevout ; I mean, the encouraging of any of that in others, by seeming well pleased with it. It is true, we should not preach in the withdrawing room, but we must, by our looks, show that we fear God, and that we dare not hear anything to His prejudice, nor anything filthy, or that tends to the prejudice of our Neighbour ; and where any of these are found, there, as much as ever we can, to avoid them. As to what we say ourselves, the same Rules are to be observed ; and we must take care that we talk not to be the wittiest in the Company ; to acquire praise to ourselves above our Neighbours. We may divert people, and be innocently merry ; but then we must not design praise to ourselves, nor please ourselves if we have it in the thoughts of it, but in some short and silent prayer, desire God to keep us low in our own Eyes, as 'Lord, make me poor in spirit, that I may inherit the kingdom of Heaven,' or by calling to mind that saying of St. Paul, 'What hast thou which thou didst not receive, and if thou hast received it, why dost thou boast ?' In short, we must talk to divert

others, not to gain applause to ourselves ; and if there be any that are able and willing to do it, let us not be impatient to prefer them before us. But this is but sometimes to be done ; it is not a fault if you should not always be so willing to keep silence whilst others speak.

“ As to your retirement after you come in, it is only to examine the day, and if you have been faulty, in all humility to acknowledge it to Almighty God, and whatever the fault has been, to read some portion of Scripture which concerns it, if you can find any ; if not, to read some Chapter in St. John’s Gospel, especially the 15th, or 16th, or 17th, &c. that do most divinely set forth the Love of God to us. The reason why I urge this, is, that your sorrow for sin may proceed from the sense you have of God’s great mercy and love to us ; and that Consideration will melt your hearts, and keep you close, and make you desire to draw near Him ; but Hell terrifies, and damnation amazes, and I am never the better for those reflections.

“ And after this is passed, you both being Good, and friends as well as Sisters, will do well to contrive together how you may defeat the Devil, and make Solomon’s words true, that ‘ two are better than one.’

After this, in God's name, I know no harm,—if your devotions of the day and task that you assign yourselves are over,—but that you may be as cheerful as your Innocence can make you, which in both is very great.

“As to one particular in the dress, I think I have not spoken concerning the expensive part. But that only concerns ——, and Mrs. ——, whose purses are small, that they take care, upon no account whatsoever, they exceed what their pension is; for no duty to the Queen, in making a show behind her, can excuse one from Justice to our Neighbour, before that God in whose presence we walk, and [who] will avenge the Cause of the wronged. But I am sensible not only this last, but all I have said, has been not only as to my part silly, but as to yours, superfluous, only Love and Goodwill I dare say will plead my excuse before two so good young Creatures for a greater fault than this, and therefore not doubting but I am forgiven, I will [end] with a prayer drawn from the Sermon we heard this morning.

“That you two, who have so gloriously and so resolutely set yourselves to serve God in your younger days, may continue to be still what you are, examples of virtue and modesty in a Court, dutiful to your

Mistress, obedient and loving to your Mother, affectionate to each other, and charitable to all the world. Beside, may you be wise Virgins, having Oil in your Lamps ready prepared to meet the Bridegroom. May you be burning and shining lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, and as the Minister said this day, 'May you, as Samuel, and David, Josiah, Timothy, and St. John, be wholly dedicated to God's Service, as was the first ; zealous for His Glory, as was the second ; constantly seeking the God of your fathers, as was the third ; well instructed in Scriptures, as was the fourth ; and at last may you, as St. John was, be admitted into the Bosom of our Dear Jesus, where you will have your short youth turned into Eternity, your earthly treasure to an heavenly, and your worldly greatness and power exchanged for a Crown of Glory.' Amen with all my heart."

And now, O blessed Saint, how dost thou shine above ! What a Circle of Stars diadems thy Temples ! what a Jubilation amongst the Angels at thy access into the Glorious Hierarchy ! Verily, Madam, I have had thoughts above the world, when I sometimes considered the life of this excellent Creature, her rare examples, happy success, and the fruits which have been planted and cultivated by her holy Industry and

labour of Love, were it by her beauty, by her wit, her conversation, her prayers and devotions, her zeal and pious insinuations, her example or peculiar address ; being wily, she caught them by Craft, and as I said, I would sometimes call her the Fisheress of her sex. What shall I add ? She was fortunate in all she set her hand to, because she laid out all these perfections in the service of God, the winning of souls ; and great, great is her reward !

Nor did this confine her only to the Court, amongst the Great. I have already told how diligently she would inquire out the poor and miserable, even [in] Hospitals, humble Cells, and Cottages, whither I have sometimes accompanied her, as far as the very skirts and obscure places of the Town, among whom she not only [gave] liberal alms, but physicians and physic she would send to some, yea, and administer Remedies herself, and the meanest offices. She would sit and read, instruct and pray, whole afternoons, and took care for their spiritual relief by procuring a Minister of Religion to prepare them for the holy Sacrament, for which purpose she not only carried and gave them books of Salvation and Devotion, but had herself collected diverse Psalms and Chapters proper to be read and used upon

such occasions. How many naked poor Creatures she covered ! I have by me one List of no fewer than twenty-three, whom she clad at one time, and your Ladyship may remember, and I have already noted, for whom she wrought with her own hands.

To assist her then in the disposing of these and innumerable other Charities, there was a poor religious Widow, whom your Ladyship knew she had a more particular Confidence in. How she found her out, I never informed myself, but well remember a passage of something extraordinary that happened to her concerning a Voice which she solemnly affirmed had spoken to her, being once at prayers in the Church and in great distress. I shall say nothing as to that, but that it was this pious and humble Creature, whose diligence she used, to inform her of sick and miserable people, who accompanied her to their Habitations, and brought them Clothes, Money, and Medicines, and whereof they spent whole days in devotion together. By her it was she distributed weekly pensions, looked after orphan Children, put them to school, visited the prisons, out of which, amongst diverse others, she had redeemed a dissolute son of hers, that cost a very considerable sum, as she had paid the debts, and indeed wholly maintained the Mother to

her dying day, though being taken with a dead palsy, and in a manner bed-ridden, a year or two before. She survived her Benefactress, but not her bounty : thus when she went into France, she ordered me to continue many other pensions which she gave, and I could give you an account of what house rent she paid for indigent housekeepers, what Apprentices she put forth, and your Ladyship remembers, and I have already touched, the little Child she kept always with her, and cherished to the last. So sedulous was she in these acts of Charity, that from the time I could calculate, she had begun and persisted in this Course from a Child herself : and for the last seven Years of her life, I can speak of my own knowledge, that her liberality was so disproportioned to her Revenue, that I have sometimes called it profusion, at which she would smile, and bid me take no care. What she herself distributed more privately I know not, but sure I am it was a great deal more than ever she would discover, taking all the cautions imaginable, that nothing she did of this nature should be known—no, not to her left hand what her right hand did—and therefore often would she herself walk out alone and on foot, and fasting, and in midst of winter, when it was hardly fit to send a servant out, to minister to

some poor creatures she had found out, and perhaps whom nobody knew of besides, so far had her love to God and piety to others overcome nature and the delicate tenderness of her sex and constitution.

See then what I find in her Diary, among the Resolutions (as I said) she was wont to set down in her own hand. It seems she had lost at Cards—a diversion which she affected not, but to comply with others, when sometimes she could not avoid it. Behold, Madam, with what remorse, with what discretion !

“ June the 2nd.

“ I will never play this half year but at three penny ombre, and then with one at halves. I will not ; I do not vow, but I will not do it,—what, lose money at Cards, yet not give the poor ? It is robbing God, mis-spending time, and misemploying my Talent : three great Sins ! Three pounds would have kept three people from starving a month : well, I will not play.”

Here is a blessed Creature ! It is in this precious Manuscript that I find an account of the particular mercies she had received from God, amongst which

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that He had given so religious a Mother, such good breeding, early receiving the Blessed Sacrament, the prayers of holy people for her, and assistance of a spiritual Guide, which (says she) I am confident was the reward of my receiving at the Charter-house. I take notice of it here, because it is there she blessed God that she had been serviceable, both to poor and Rich, in that He had been pleased to make her His Instrument, and so goes on to thank Him for the many personal dangers and accidents she had escaped, all which she particularises. But to return to her Charities,—than which I know no greater mark of a consummate Christian,—I may not omit that other branch of it, her visiting and releasing of prisoners, of which I think I can produce a list of above thirty restrained for debts in several prisons, which she paid and compounded for at once. Nor were these, as I said, sudden fits of devotion, but her continued practice, and such as took up a considerable portion of her life ; and such infinite satisfaction took she in this blessed Employment, as that often have I known her privately slip away and break from the gay and public Company, the greatest entertainments, and greatest persons too of the Court, to make a step to some miserable poor sick Creature, whilst those she

quitted have wondered why she went from the conversation ; and more they would, had they seen how the scene was changed from a kingly palace to some mean cottage, from the Company of princes to poor necessitous wretches, when by and by she would return as cheerful and in good humour, as if she had been about some worldly concern, and excuse her absence in the most innocent manner imaginable. Never must I forget the innocent pleasure she took in doing Charities. It was one day that I was with her, when seeing a poor Creature in the streets, "Now," says she to me, "how will I make that miserable wretch rejoice." Upon which she sent him ten times more than I am confident he ever could expect. This she spake, not as boasting, but so as one might perceive her very soul lifted up in secret Joy, to consider how the miserable man would be made happy with the surprise. So as summing all these Instances together, I might well compare this Lady to those excellent persons whose praise is in the Gospel, and whose names (St. Paul assures us, Acts x. 2) are written in the book of life, being like Cornelius and Dorcas, full of good works and alms-deeds which she did ; as Priscilla, she instructed many more perfectly in

the ways of God ; as Mary, she bestowed much labour ; nor do I ever think of her but I call to mind the Phebes and Tryphosas, Julia and Olympia, Claudia and [Tryphena]: to whom the Apostle would certainly have added Margarita, this Pearl of ours, had she been then in the world, who were servants of the Churches, succourers of the Saints, helpers in Christ Jesus, and who were even ready to lay down their lives for the Gospel. So flagrant was her zeal, so pure her Charity, so vehement and sincere her love to God, as often to quit the Ease and pleasures of life, and dismiss the Diversions of a Court, to possess those Divine and supernal pleasures of doing good ; and the blessing of Him that was ready to perish came upon her who caused the widow's heart to sing for Joy, for she was Eyes to the blind, and feet to the Lamé, in all things showing herself a pattern of good works. In a word, her life did so shine before Men, that those who saw her good works could not but be stirred up to glorify God ; yet by grace we are saved through faith, and not of ourselves ; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them !

And now after all this, I need no more produce her Diary. Having given your Ladyship so minute an Account of her Life and actions, I shall only add, that to the particulars of the Mercies she received, Resolutions made, and Graces which she desired, she composed many excellent Prayers, Praises, and Devotions, pertinent to the occasion, and to which I might subjoin the wonderful Condescension, already noted, in constantly giving me once a year a little history of her life, and what had happened of most concern in her particular, what failings, and Improvements she was sensible of, with an Ingenuity extraordinary, and breathing a pious friendship, desiring my direction and my prayers, which a thousand times I needed more than she, who had, as your Ladyship well knows, and is already noted, a Ghostly father, with whom frequently corresponding, she constantly received proper Ministries and advice in matters cognizable to that sacred Character. To him it was she often revealed her Conscience, as from a Child she before had done to a devout and learned prelate of our Church by the extraordinary Care of her pious and excellent Mother, as herself has told me, looking on it as the greatest blessing she had ever left her.

And thus, Madam, I have, according to the best of my poor ability, complied with your Ladyship's commands, and given you the Life of this incomparable Lady: which though I may not have performed to the height and merit of the subject, I have yet, methinks, paid an obligation to the memory of one you loved, and that honoured me with friendship never to be forgotten, since it let me into a Conversation of so great advantage. In a word, to justify what I present your Ladyship, and sum up all. I have been oft partaker of her sadness and brighter days, witness of her devoutest Recollections, accurate and extraordinary Preparations, ardent Zeal, and unwearied Devotions, cheerful and even profusive Charities and labours of Love, for her secular concerns was only in order to Spiritual.

In sum :—

Never was there a more unspotted virgin, a more loyal wife, a more sincere friend, a more consummate Christian; add to this, a florid youth, an exquisite and natural beauty, and gracefulness the most becoming. Nor was she to be disguised: there was nothing more quick and piercing than her apprehension, nothing more faithful than her memory, more solid and mature than her judgment,

insomuch as I have heard her husband affirm to me (whose discernment all that have the honour to know him will allow to be extraordinary) that even in the greatest difficulties and occasions, he has both asked and preferred her advice with continual success. And with these solid parts she had all the advantages of a most sparkling wit, a natural Eloquence, a gentle and agreeable tone of voice, and a charming accent when she spake, whilst the Charms of her countenance were made up of the greatest innocence, modesty, and goodness imaginable, agreeable to the Composure of her thoughts, and the union of a thousand perfections : add to all this, she was just, invincible, secret, ingeniously sincere, faithful in her promises, and to a miracle, temperate, and mistress of her passions and resolutions ; and so well had she employed her span of time, that as oft as I consider how much she knew, and writ, and did, I am plainly astonished, and blush even for myself. O how delightful entertaining was this Lady, how grave her discourse, how unlike the Conversation of her sex ! when she was the most facetious, it would always end in a cheerful composedness the most becoming in the world, for she was the tenderest Creature living of taking advantage

of another's Imperfections ; nothing could be more humble and full of Compassion, nothing more disposed to all offices of kindness. In a word, what perfections were scattered amongst others of her sex, seemed here to be united, and she went every day improving, shining brighter and ascending still in virtue.

I should here add something concerning the obsequies and funeral of this blessed Saint, on which occasion is not to be omitted the earnest request she so provisionally made, that she might be interred in the Dormitory of her husband's family and Relations, though it were not much less than three hundred miles distance from the place where she was born and bred, that so her ashes might hereafter be mingled with his whom so entirely she loved ; and which, after her Corpse had been embalmed and wrapped in lead, was (as your Ladyship knows) as religiously performed, decently and with much honour, but without pomp or ostentation, on the 16th day of September, 1678, in the Church of Breague, in the parish of Godolphin, in Cornwall, of which that family have been Lords and of illustrious name both before and since the Conquest ; and where, being alive, she had often in my hearing expressed such a longing desire to have passed the

rest of her days, that, being remote from the noise of Cities, Courts, and the subjecting Impertinences attending them, she might entirely vacate [to] the service of God : not but that wherever she lived she did it as much as ever any blessed Creature did, but because she fancied she should do it better there, which was impossible.

Here then let us leave our Saint at rest, but ourselves at none, till by following her example we arrive at that blessed repose whither she is gone before !

I

For thou (dear Soul) to Heavens fled,
Hast all the virtues with thee, thither led,
We here see thee no more.
Thou to that bright and glorious place
Art run, hast won the Race :
A Crown of Rays,
And never-fading Bays,
Such as on Heaven's Parnassus grows,
Deck thine Angelic Brows ;
A Robe of Righteousness about thee cast.
Bathed in Celestial Bliss, thou there dost taste
Pleasures at God's right hand,
Pleasures that ever last,
And greater than we here can understand,
But are for such as serve Him best reserved in store.

I

How long, Lord, ah ! how long .
Wait we below !
Our sodden feet stick in the Clay,
We through the body's Dungeon see no day.
Sorrows on sorrows throng,
Friendships (the souls of life) and friends depart
To other worlds, and new Relations know.
Ah ! Thou who art
The starry orbs above,
Essential Love,
Reach forth Thy gracious hand,
And send me wings for flight,
Set me upon that holy Land,
O bring me to the happy shore
Where no dark night
Obscure[s] the day, where all is light ;
A City there not made with hands
Within the blissful region stands,
Where we in every street
Our dearest friends again shall meet,
And friendships more refined and sweet,
And never lose them more !

Amen.

FINIS.

IN MARGARITAM EPITAPHIUM.

Here lyes a Pearle—none such the ocean yields
In all the Treasures of his liquid fields ;
Butt such as that wise Merchant wisely sought
Who the bright Gemm with all his substance bought ;
Such to Jerusalem above translates
Our God, t'adorne the Entrance of her gates ;
The Spouse with such Embroderie does come
To meete her Nuptialls—the Celestial Groome.

On the copper plate sothered on the Coffinn.

TEXTUAL NOTES

3, 25. [nor to be passed over], suggested by the present editor; *cp.* p. 103, "Nor pass I the sad anniversary."

15, 10. [Malachi.] The original reads Micha, but W. correctly "Micha [Malachi]"; *cp.* iii. 17.

17, 9. [words]; W. "method."

26, 3. [that of], perhaps it is hardly necessary to add these words inserted by W.

30, 5. Him; W. "him"; but *cp.* *Rom.* xvi. 4.

31, 3. friendships; W. "friendship."

32, 1. all in tears; W. "all in fears."

32, 10. [that], so W. The sentence is perhaps best without it. So, too, as regards [it] and [and], 38, 8; 38, 22; [more], 51, 20; [the], 76, 4; [her woman], 106, 3; [as], 132, 3; [it is], 139, 11.

42, 7. your two sisters: so W. Holmes, "apparently an error for *you two sisters*."

43, 20. St. Hierome, *i.e.* Jerome.

47, 10. [own] should perhaps be read; W. "whole."

74, 24. [secrecy]; W. "sacrifice [secrecy?]."

79, 8. [she] fell; W. "and fell."

83, 17. bail; Holmes suggests "bale."

89, 18. In September; W. "V: in September." Holmes; "who V. the architect was, it is not easy to determine. It must not be mistaken to mean Vanbrugh, for he was not born till 1672." Perhaps "V" merely stands for *viz.* It has been omitted in the text.

- 94, 20. fifteenth ; *cp.* p. 71, 17. "upon the 16th."
 96, 16. nothing in : (?) nothing in [it].
 101, 22. pigeons ; *read* "pigeons."
 103, 22. "Sept. the 9th, 1678, in the 25th year ; but *cp.*
 p. 3, "the second of August, in the year 1652."
 110, 23. indeed could ; W. "indeed [who] could."
 111, 13.—112, 16. No indication in W. that these are ex-
 tracts from E's correspondence.
 112, 6. reves ; W. "reverses."
 119, 3. [were] ; W. "was extended."
 120, 24. mine ; so W. (?) mien.
 124, 22. but her ; W. "but [what] her."
 125, 3. circle, could ; W. "circle [who] could."
 133, 6. wise ; W. "wife."
 133, 13 [slow] : W. "not to learn."
 150. 4 [Tryphena] ; W. "Claudia and to whom the Apostle
 would certainly have added Margarita." Evelyn's parallelism
 and the sense of the passage are restored by the addition
 of "Tryphena."
 151, 23. [her] ; W. his [her ?]
 156, 16. obscure[s] ; W. "obscure."

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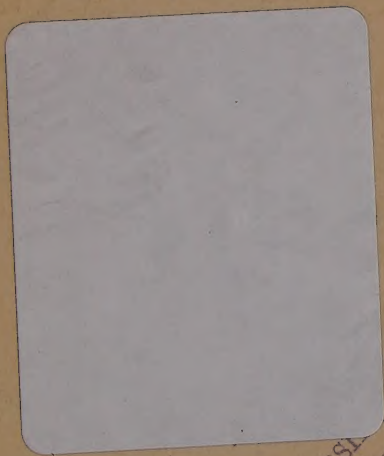
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